David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries

Anne Jerslev

palgrave
macmillan

Anne Jerslev

David Lynch
Blurred Boundaries

1st ed. 2021

palgrave
macmillan

Anne Jerslev
Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

ISBN 978-3-030-73923-2 e-ISBN 978-3-030-73924-9
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries

"Longstanding Lynchian scholar Anne Jerslev brings her considerable expertise and knowledge of David Lynch's wide-ranging artistic practice to great effect in this impressive book. Tackling Lynch's output across various diverse genres and media, she expands the analysis of his oeuvre, adding to the better-known film and television work whilst delving into other less well-explored areas, thereby enriching our understanding of the significance of these different aspects of Lynch's highly creative art life. By doing so Jerslev argues persuasively that each work, in whatever field, contributes to a continuing and expanding experimental total work of art. *David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries* approaches Lynch's artistic practice from a range of fascinating perspectives, supported throughout by detailed academic and philosophical sources, to explicate how and why David Lynch is an important artist whose work can help orientate us in the fragmented and precarious time in which we find ourselves."

—Allister Mactaggart, author of *The Film Paintings of David Lynch: Challenging Film Theory* (2010)

"As early as 1991, when the original *Twin Peaks* was being placed on "indefinite hiatus", Anne Jerslev wrote her first book on David Lynch, introducing new ideas and theoretical frameworks for understanding his body of work. In *David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries*, Professor Jerslev has turned her attention to different parts of his oeuvre, going beyond his popular films and TV series and also exploring some of his paintings, installations, music videos and commercials. Jerslev has written a book that is about more than just cinema—delving into fragments, textures, digital art and ambiguities—and she has opened our eyes to new ways of seeing and understanding Lynch's work. Jerslev's book is an important contribution to the field—highly insightful and philosophical, yet wonderfully clear and accessible—and it is a "must buy" for any scholar or fan of David Lynch and his many works."

—Andreas Halskov, author of *TV Peaks: Twin Peaks and Modern Television Drama* (2015) and *Beyond Television: TV Production in the Multiplatform Era* (2021)

“Anne Jerslev, the author of the first scholarly monograph on David Lynch, has written a new book that offers a bold revision to how we think about Lynchian aesthetics. Decentering his feature films, she turns our attention to his paintings, photographs, shorts, music videos, commercials, and web documentary series, all in the interest of understanding his oeuvre as a “total work.” The possibilities for discovery seem nearly infinite with Jerslev as our guide through “installational exhibition” space, constructions of temporality and representations of aging, uses of digital technology, sound-image relations, the concept of the “fragment,” and the experience of the “uncanny” and the “sublime.” As she creatively brings together film and media theory, art history, and visual culture studies, she blurs as many boundaries as her experimental artist-subject.”

—Will Scheibel, co-author (with Julie Grossman) of *Twin Peaks* (2020)

Acknowledgments

I have been so lucky to be invited to talk about David Lynch's work on different occasions and to different audiences during many years. These talks and inspiring questions from the audiences have been a great pleasure. They have been immensely useful for taking on my thoughts and for writing this book. I am grateful for having been invited to present at SCMS panels: Thank you to Arild Fetveit and Asbjørn Grønstad for inviting me to talk about "Visual 'noise' in David Lynch's *Lady Blue Shanghai* (2010)" back at the 2013 SCMS conference, to Martha Nochimson for asking me to talk about "David Lynch and haptic audio-visality in "Crazy Clown Time" (2011)" at SCMS 2015 and to Will Scheibel for inviting me to talk about "Textures of ageing in David Lynch's work" at the SCMS 2018 conference.

I would also like to thank Lucia Nagib for inviting me to talk about "David Lynch in the digital world—time, texture and digitality in the *Interview Project*" at the Impure Cinema seminar in Leeds back in 2010. Likewise, I would like to thank Jon Inge Faldalen for, back in 2014, inviting me to talk about "David Lynch's digital works—*Interview Project* and *Lady Blue Shanghai*" at The Film House in Oslo and to Andreas Rauscher, Marcel Hartwig and Peter Niedermüller for asking me to talk about "David Lynch's sense of temporality" at the Lynch seminar in Siegen, Germany in September 2019. Finally, thanks to Espen Ytreberg and Helge Jordheim for inviting me to spend parts of January and February 2019 at the Center for Advanced Studies in Oslo, Norway where I worked on the third chapter of this book.

I would like to thank my colleagues at the media section, Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen for contributing to an inspiring and enjoyable work environment and also for their feedback on the first broad outline of my manuscript. Above all, I would like to thank Christa Lykke Christensen, Stig Hjarvard, Mette Mortensen and Nete Nørgaard Kristensen for having been great colleagues during many years—and in particular Christa Lykke Christensen for nearly twenty-five years of friendship and conversations. In addition, I thank my colleagues, and first and foremost Anne Gjelsvik, at the Department of Art and Media Studies, NTNU, Trondheim, Norway. I was kindly invited to Trondheim as a

Professor II and I managed to present an outline of my book and give a few lectures before Covid-19, unfortunately, put an end to my visits.

I thank Anne Ring Petersen for generously discussing my idea about *The Air is on Fire* as an installational exhibition and Marie Louise Svane for an inspiring discussion about the fragment and the German Romantics. I'm incredibly grateful to curator Hélène Kelmachter for meeting me in Paris to discuss *The Air is on Fire* and for reminding me of the exhibition choreography—and to Peter Jørgensen and Elin Skammelsen for discussing the Fondation Cartier building.

Thanks are owed to Jesper Koppel, Jasper Spanning, Morten Bruus, Anders Lysne and Kenneth Varpe for telling me about different kinds of digital cameras and their affordances.

I also owe my warmest thanks to Michael Barile, Patrick Gries, Jamie Manné, Adeline Pelletier and Jason S. and Austin Lynch for their helpfulness on granting me permission to use illustrations. Finally, thank you to David Lynch for his final approval of reproducing paintings, drawings and photographs in my book.

Not least, I would like to thank my husband, Erik Svendsen. When I wrote my first book about David Lynch, I thanked him for always generously laying his own works aside in order to read mine and for giving me inspiring and precise feedback. Quite a few things have changed during the past 30 years; however, this has not changed: Erik is always enthusiastic about reading my work. He is both generous and sharp, and always offers valuable comments and suggestions.

Finally, thanks to our daughter Nina Jerslev Svendsen for her continuous encouragement. This book is dedicated to Erik and Nina.

Contents

1 Introduction

What This Book Is and What It Is Not

The Blurring of Boundaries

The Chapters

2 Lynchian Atmospheres: About and Around *The Air Is on Fire* (2007): An Installational Exhibition

The Lynch Exhibition at the Fondation Cartier in Paris, France

Intermediality

This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago (2004)

An Installational Exhibition

Atmospheres and Lynchian Atmospheres

Atmospheric Film Spaces in Lynch

A Contemporary Total Media Work

3 David Lynch and Time: Textures of Ageing

Textures, Abstractions, Transformations

Textures of Ageing—Abandoned Factory Photography and Snowmen

Textures of Ageing—Alvin's Face in *The Straight Story*

Textures of Ageing in *Twin Peaks: The Return*

The Death of Margaret Lanterman

The Ghost of Laura Palmer in *Twin Peaks: The Return*

"Meanwhile"

4 David Lynch and the Digital

"Digital is Here"

Interview Project—An i-doc

The Website
Meetings
Having Been There—"Indexical Traces"
Traces of Time Passing
The Post-perspectival and Post-cinematic: Screens and Time in INLAND EMPIRE
A World of Digital Screens
The Film
"Some Newer Media Form": Transgressing the Boundaries between Media
The Digital Event
Screens and Surveillance
Two Different Digital Works
5 David Lynch and Visual Noise
Visual Noise
Visual Noise: Short Experimental Films
Visual Noise in *Lady Blue Shanghai*
David Lynch and Commercials
Lady Blue Shanghai
Visual Noise in *Crazy Clown Time* and *I Have a Radio*
6 David Lynch and the Fragment
"I Always Go by Ideas"
The Fragment in Theory
The "Dance for Freedom" Fragment and the "Dying Girl" Fragment in *Wild at Heart*
Four Kinds of Fragments
The "Las Vegas" Fragment

The "Floating Cube" Fragment in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Episode 3

Veiling Fragments

Spectacle Fragments

7 David Lynch and Fear: The Uncanny and the Sublime

The Uncanny—in Freud and in Lynch

Freud and The Sandman

"Home"

The Sublime

The White Sands Atomic Bomb Explosion in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Episode 8

8 Conclusion

The Blurring of Boundaries—Again

Worlds and the Blurring of Boundaries between Dream and Reality

Repetition and the Blurring of Boundaries

Blurry Images

Notes

References

Index

List of Figures

Illustration 1.1 *Hello*, mixed media painting ©David Lynch

Illustration 2.1 The exhibition front with *David Lynch* in lilac neon. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Illustration 2.2 Exhibition interior (grey room). Art works: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Illustration 2.3 Exhibition interior with coloured curtains. Art works: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Illustration 2.4 Close-up of *Rock with Seven Eyes*. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Illustration 2.5 The sitting room installation. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Illustration 2.6 *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago*. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Illustration 3.1 *Bob Sees Himself Walking Towards a Formidable Abstraction*, painting. © David Lynch

Illustration 3.2 Blurry close up of skin from *Nudes*, photograph. © David Lynch

Illustrations 3.3 and 3.4 Two of Lynch's factory photographs. © David Lynch

Illustration 3.5 *Snowmen* photograph. © David Lynch

Illustration 4.1 The site (framegrab). © davidlynch.com

Illustrations 4.2 and 4.3 Lynch zigzagging and "David Lynch presents" (framegrabs). © davidlynch.com

Illustration 5.1 Framegrab from *Industrial Soundscape*

Illustration 5.2 Digital blurring in *Lady Blue Shanghai (framegrab)*

Illustration 5.3 Digital blurring in *Lady Blue Shanghai (framegrab)*

Illustration 5.4 Framegrab from *Crazy Clown Time*

Illustration 5.5 Framegrab from *I Have a Radio*

Illustration 6.1 The note with words. © David Lynch

Illustration 6.2 Framegrab from *Twin Peaks: The Return*, the Mauve Zone

Illustration 7.1 Framegrab of Laura Dern and Kyle MacLachlan from *Twin Peaks*: *The Return*

Illustration 7.2 Framegrab from *Wild at Heart*

Illustration 7.3 Framegrabs of the red carpet at the Glastonbury Grove, *Twin Peaks*

Illustration 7.4 Framegrab from the beginning of the White Sands episode, *Twin Peaks: The Return*

Illustration 8.1 Framegrab from *Duran Duran Unstaged*

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_1

1. Introduction

Anne Jerslev[1]
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anne Jerslev
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

Am I a good man or a bad man?
—Frederick Treves to his wife in The Elephant Man
I don't know if you are a detective or a pervert.
—Sandy to Jeffrey in Blue Velvet

What This Book Is and What It Is Not

I published a book about David Lynch's films and *Twin Peaks* in 1991. It was written in Danish, but it was the first book published about the film director (it was translated into German four years later). It consisted of chapters about Lynch's individual films in chronological order, finishing with *Twin Peaks.* Since then, a comprehensive literature about Lynch's films, *Twin Peaks* and *Twin Peaks: The Return* has been published. Many book-length studies have been organized like my own book, with single chapters scrutinising his film and TV oeuvre in chronological order. Moreover, numerous articles have undertaken studies of single films. Undoubtedly, David Lynch is regarded as a director of film and TV series, and he is justly praised as such, by academics, critics and audiences. However, let me say from the very beginning that *David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries* is not a book about David Lynch the film director. Neither is it a book which offers an exhaustive presentation of every single piece, large or small, that he has made in addition to the films and the *Twin Peaks* series. I have not been excavating the Internet for hidden gems bearing the Lynch signature, as I am sure devoted Lynch fans would be better informed about this than I am. Yet, this book explores a diversity of works made by David Lynch. It also goes into his films, of course, but there is no chapter which offers an in-depth analysis of one single film.

This book does not regard David Lynch as a film director who has *also* ventured into a lot of other art forms. *David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries* is a book in which I cut across his diverse works and discuss them from different angles. However, all chapters have a focus on the blurring of boundaries—between media, between genres, between dreams, reality and screened reality and between the transparent and representational and the blurred and abstract within the image. As such, I do not regard his *film oeuvre* and TV series as more important per se than any other work by Lynch, be it a painting, a music video, a window display, photography, a website, or a short film "experiment".

David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries departs from an understanding of the Lynch oeuvre as a *total work*. In each chapter, I discuss parts of this total work. I therefore use the term "work" as encompassing the entire body of work as well as more specific works. I discuss more extensively

a range of *paintings* , some of Lynch's *photographic series*, a couple of his *music videos* and one of his *commercials* . In addition, I scrutinise one of the many Lynch *exhibitions*, which I propose to regard as yet another Lynch work and which I call an *installational exhibition* . I analyse and discuss excerpts of his *feature films* and the two *Twin Peaks* series, I examine a *website* Lynch hosted, and finally I think through aspects of his *short films*. Many of his other creative expressions are mentioned, but more in passing.

I began this introduction with two quotes from Lynch films, *The Elephant Man* and *Blue Velvet* , in which the protagonists ask a similar type of question. Frederic Treves' wife answers, of course, that he is a good man. Jeffrey answers Sandy somewhat more enigmatically: "That's for me to know and you to find out". However, my point is that questions like these which call for an either/or response are never given a straight answer in Lynch's world. Answers are always ambiguous, multiple. Correspondingly, characters are seldom just one thing but are complex and complicated, split, fragile and often without firm boundaries (which is of course most pronounced in *Twin Peaks: The Return*). What I find so intriguing in Lynch's total work is a persistent, bold and creative effort to constantly test and blur boundaries and thus again and again challenge predetermined ways of looking and hearing. David Lynch defamiliarises in a radical way the familiar, and in doing so he brings about both uneasiness, curiosity and fascination. Accordingly, the intention with this book is to scrutinise this blurring of boundaries across Lynch's entire body of work and the aesthetic, thematic and affective possibilities this artistic approach entails. This may appear as a contradictory endeavour as I am interested in the blurring of boundaries and yet set limits by focusing on a demarcated body of works. However, even though this is not a book about Lynch's films, it is a book about David Lynch as a significant artist in the contemporary media world who has for many years creatively explored and contributed to the omnipresent blurring of boundaries in contemporary media culture, between art and entertainment, between high and low, between mainstream film and art film and between media and genres.

One of the anonymous reviewers who was asked to make a report on my proposal for this book wrote a bit sceptically in an otherwise

very useful report that “many observers remain to be convinced that his [i.e., Lynch’s] artwork, adverts and internet projects are nearly as compelling as his major cinematic works or that their value merits more than passing curiosity”. I do not agree, of course. My interest is not to rank David Lynch’s works and argue why one film is a major artwork rather than another. Undoubtedly David Lynch will, deservedly, pass into film and media history as one of the great makers of film and TV series during the last decades of the twentieth century and the first decades of the 2000s. I am not a film or TV critic or an art critic but a film and media scholar who is interested in the way media explore, produce and contribute to culture and society. Moreover, I see Lynch as an artist who is interested in exploring what *different* media can do and how different media can be put to use in order to realise what Lynch himself calls “an idea” but what can also be thought of as his exploration of (audio)visual worlds.

Philosopher Boris Groys and filmmaker Andrei Ujica have in conversation talked about Lynch as a “collector of himself” (2007: 380). I find this to be a precise characteristic of a work which keeps evolving in a non-continuous way and which can—for that very same reason—be characterised as always in process. One work may be finished, but as Lynch himself has said on more than one occasion—which I will repeat a couple of times in what follows—a work “isn’t finished till it’s finished”. Lynch is repeatedly returning to earlier works and ideas, picking out elements, repeating them and inserting them into a new context. Thereby he could be said to experiment with what I would call an aesthetics of fragmentation. Thus, I see Lynch’s total work not so much as a whole but as a *total* of different works held together by many different means across genres and media, composing a dynamic and changing internal network.

By using the word “total”, I create a view of David Lynch’s work in which one medium or genre is not more important than the other. I see this total work as an intermedia work, which I approach from a cross-disciplinary angle. Moreover, by using the word “total”, I am not offering an exhaustive overview of this large and diverse body of work. Just like I see Lynch’s total work as composed with the fragment as a central aesthetic component, my analytical approach is fragmented.

Accordingly, the book is not organised in relation to works but in relation to ideas I want to follow. I do not take a horizontal approach to the works, meaning that I am not after chronology and artistic development over time. By picking up and discussing fragments across and beyond individual works, I follow what I see as certain aesthetic strategies and themes and discuss how they speak to contemporary anxieties. I use diverse theoretical concepts which inspire me and which I find to be useful discussants with the works. Moreover, I have been interested in elaborating upon some of the terms and expressions that David Lynch himself has used repeatedly in different contexts when asked to explain with what he was occupied. Thus, I have been curious to try to understand what Lynch actually meant, for example, by "fragment" and "texture". But most importantly, I myself have been inspired by these terms which I have transformed from descriptive to analytical concepts. I have evolved them theoretically from my own academic position and enabled them to enter into a conversation with single images, passages, scenes or sequences in one or more works. For example, a beautiful quote from Lynch about textures, which I use as the headline for the third chapter in this book, has led me to contemplate what I have called "textures of ageing ". Thus, I discuss how textured images of the passing of time are prominent in some of his works. The same goes for Lynch's recurrent praise of the affordances of digital equipment during the last decade and a half. I discuss in which ways and with which results Lynch has been using digital tools and genres in Chaps. 4 and 5.

As a consequence of this approach, the theoretical landscape of the book is broad. I draw on theories from a diversity of academic fields, such as film and media studies, philosophy, visual studies and aesthetics and also from art history and cultural geography. However, for most of the core theoretical concepts in the chapters, such as atmosphere, intermediality, the post-perspectival, the palimpsest(uous), the uncanny, the fragment and the sublime, I present them in some length. Therefore, the chapters switch between discussions of a theoretical concept and the analytical application of it to chosen parts of Lynch's works. I am, like so many other scholars, interested in the exchanges between theory and texts. Throughout the book I explore how theory can speak to the rich worlds Lynch creates in

different media, the challenging immersion he offers into often frightening but also powerful spaces and the way the image can be stretched towards its limits as a medium of representation and also, the opposite way round, how thinking through Lynch's works can challenge theory and make us think of theoretical concepts in new ways.

The Blurring of Boundaries

In *David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries*, I think through Lynch's total work as characterised by the blurring of boundaries between media, between paintings and moving images—as so often mentioned by Lynch scholars—between paintings and sculpture and film and sculpture, between photography and animation, between still and moving images, between exhibition and installation and even between biography and autobiography (in *Room to Dream*, Lynch's joint book with Kristine McKenna (2019)). Moreover, I look into the blurring of boundaries between different spaces and temporalities, between inside and outside, dream and reality, between characters (or subjectivities) and, of course, between mainstream narrative and a more fragmented, disorderly way of creating a story or a world.

Besides this blurring of boundaries, I also see a continuous exchange with the boundaries of the (audio-visual) image and sound—more in some works than in others—which prompts questions like the following: how much can the boundaries of the small frame be pushed, how much noise can be contained in a space or a visual field, how many layers of transparent images can be put onto another, how little movement can a moving image contain, how overexposed or dark can an image be made before everything disappears? Lynch himself refers to some of his works as experiments (some of his short films from the early 2000s but also the *Duran Duran Unstaged* concert video from 2014, with its excessive use of superimpositions). The entire Lynch work can be characterised somehow as (again, to a greater or lesser degree) an experiment with images and sound and their relationship, with the aim of creating worlds into which audiences, viewers and visitors can be immersed.

David Lynch's work thus taps into current questions regarding the blurring of boundaries not only within the art world but elsewhere in

the production of media, culture and society in a broad sense. The term "piece" or "artefact" as a designation of the demarcated finished work is contested in a web-based, serialised cultural environment, in which the single work is not delimited as it used to be but is constantly developing. In this respect, it makes perfect sense that David Lynch hosted and introduced the evolving number of documentaries on the *Interview Project* website, which was constructed as an intermedia blurring of boundaries. The first larger exhibition of Lynch's works in Europe, the Paris exhibition *The Air is on Fire* is a core example of the blurring of boundaries among and around Lynch's works. I analyse this exhibition and its environment in the second chapter. I regard it not only as an exhibition of Lynch's works but a Lynch work in its own right, which, in my opinion, is at the core of his production. I discuss it as a rich intermedia work, which is open and dynamic, and in which works talk to each other and mutually transform each other in the exhibition atmosphere.

The novelty of this book is that it covers all aspects of David Lynch's works irrespective of their status as art or advertisement, music video or industrial photography. However, it is not new to discuss cross-media aspects of his production. As already stated, some scholarly work has studied Lynch's films as a crossing between paintings and film (see among others, Olson 2008; Mactaggart 2010; Gruys and Ujica 2007, Lombardo 2014). The impact of Lynch's early career as a painter on his films is analysed most detailed in Allister Mactaggart's inspiring book *The Film Paintings of David Lynch* (2010). A lot of the Lynch literature refers to Lynch's own narrative about how he almost by chance came to film from being trained as a painter. Mactaggart thus departs from an incident taking place in a room at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, which Lynch has recounted in Chris Rodley's (2005 [1997]) interview book and later repeated again and again (I also repeat the quote later on): "So, I'm looking at this figure in the painting, and I hear a little wind, and see a little movement. And I had a wish that the painting would really be able to move, you know, some little bit. And that was it" (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 37). The affordances of the film medium were able to accommodate his interests better, so paintings (and drawings and photographs) could in a sense be "set in motion", as Groys and Ujica phrase it (2007: 379), when transported into the film

medium. Mactaggart goes on to argue that this experience of movement became the central visual strategy for Lynch: making films by making his paintings move. Keeping in mind the close relationship between Lynch's films and his art works, Mactaggart claims, provides for a reading strategy which keeps the blurring of boundaries at the forefront and also contextualises Lynch's films within a broader framework.

Allister Mactaggart's book is a film book. Therefore, it is mostly occupied with the way painting as a medium influences Lynch's thinking of aesthetic and narrative development (or lack of the same) in his films. The paintings are thus regarded as subordinate to the films. In the same vein, there is not much analysis of paintings. However, by taking a closer look at some of David Lynch's (mixed media) paintings, I argue that Mactaggart understands Lynch's paintings and the differences between his still and moving images in a slightly too simple way; at least, it seems to me that the reverse is also the case. I would claim that Lynch also blurs boundaries between still and moving images in his paintings. It is possible to find a sense of movement and sound and a sense of duration in some of his paintings and argue that characteristics of the film as a medium are incorporated in some of his paintings/drawings, etc. In other words, paintings need not be transposed into another medium to provide a feeling of time and movement.

Let me take one example, one of my favourites, the apparently quite simple black and white mixed media on paper work *Hello* from 2012 (Illustration 1.1).

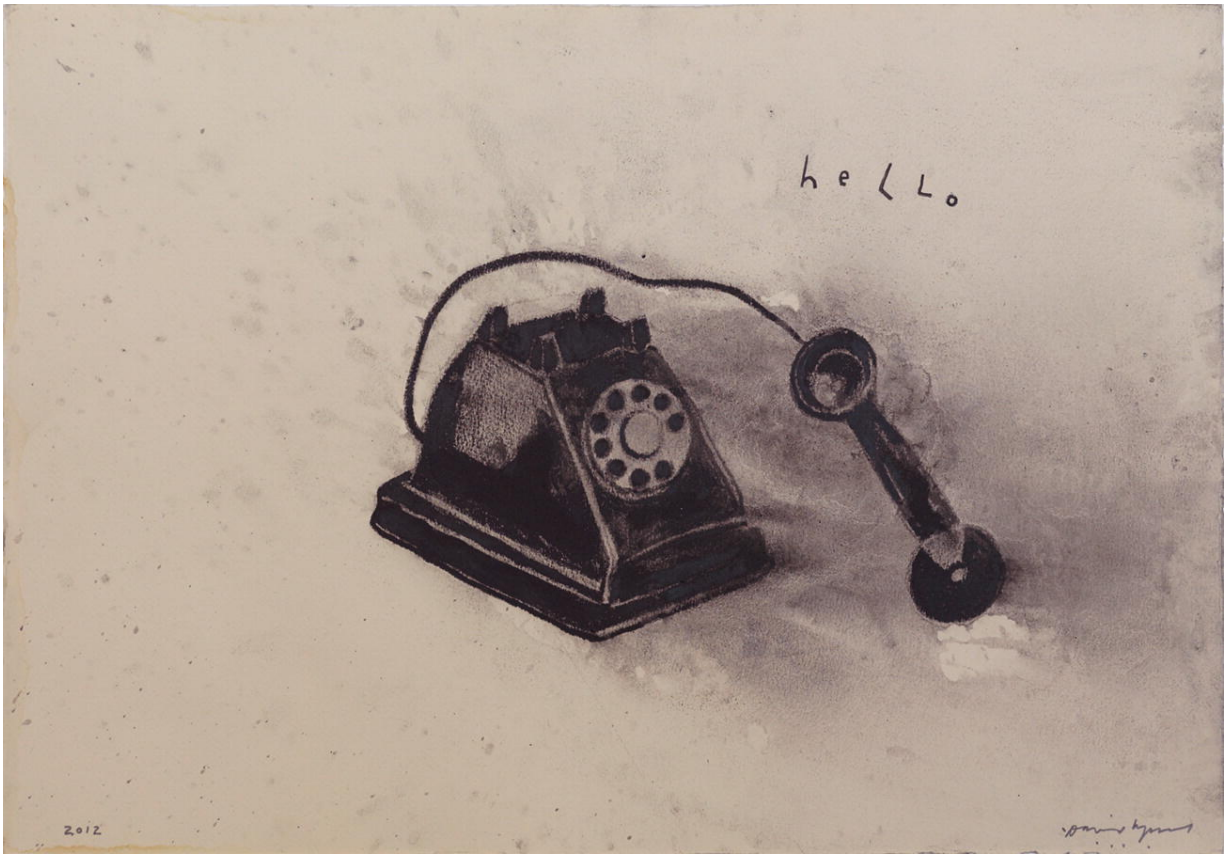


Illustration 1.1 *Hello* , mixed media painting ©David Lynch

In this mysterious work, we see a black rotary dial telephone in the middle of the picture and to the right the receiver and its cord attached to the telephone. The receiver is a bit elevated at one end. It seems to float in the air as if someone had just put it down and its movement not completely finished but captured in a split second like a frozen film image. The same goes for the cord which is still suspended in the air as a result of the pull from the receiver or because the user had been standing. The word “hello” is written above the receiver. There is no speech bubble in the image (which Lynch uses elsewhere in his paintings), but it still appears as if the sound of “hello” comes from the receiver and is amplified, as is usually the case in film. Again, it is as if someone outside the image frame had put down the telephone less than an instant ago without saying goodbye and the sound and the atmosphere of miscommunication or the lack of communication is vibrating across the image surface.

Behind the receiver, a dark cloud is drawn in delicate lines. It may be expressing a dark atmosphere, providing a metaphoric expression of the affect which led to the incident to which the work is alluding. My point is that this work does by proxy what the film medium is able to do. It includes sound as well as movement, and it freezes time just like film can. The freezing of time is different from a painting's or a drawing's static time. Freezing means capturing a split second of the unfolding of time. This is what *Hello* does. It implies that this is a frozen moment of an incident, which unfolds in time, afforded by a visual technology that is capable of stopping the movement of time. As such, I see this work as vibrant with movement and temporality, which it inscribes by creating a sense of being frozen in between and an atmosphere of absence. So, my argument is that this painterly work also blurs boundaries between the defining characteristics of still and moving images.

To end my exchange with Mactaggart's inspiring book, I would argue that we create intermedia studies in two different ways. Mactaggart is "thinking about *a body of work* in which art and film are so closely intertwined" (2010: 15) and is interested in the dynamic relation between media *within* the single work and the new forms that arise from this relation. The focus in *David Lynch: Blurred Boundaries*, by contrast, is on the exchanges *between* different media and genres in Lynch's total work and the affordances different media and genres provide for creating the kind of audio-visual imagery he dreams about. In that sense, my scholarly approach to David Lynch's works as a total work blurs boundaries between media and genres no less than he does himself.

I start each chapter with a couple of quotations by David Lynch. These are quotes that I find funny, significant or inspiring, that I expand on in the chapter or that somehow resonate with what I am discussing. In the beginning of the second chapter, I quote David Lynch for loving the fact that things can be understood in a myriad of different ways. He has throughout his career refrained from explaining his works. He leaves thinking and experiencing to the viewers, audiences and visitors and, like I argue in the second chapter, even makes audiences parts of a work's coming into being. When asked how he explained his art in a 2007 interview about his Paris exhibition, David Lynch expressed that

“[w]hat I can say is what you see… what you see is what I can say. And the works—they’re there, and they speak for themselves”.[1]

The Chapters

The book comprises six chapters in addition to this introduction and conclusion. In the second chapter, “Lynchian Atmospheres: About and Around *The Air is on Fire* (2007): An installational exhibition”, I discuss by which means the exhibition provides such a powerful experience of being immersed in a Lynchian space. I engage with the ways the Lynch exhibition creates an open and fluid environment filled with atmosphere, to which the exhibited works contribute, the mise en scène of the exhibition rooms, the surroundings of the exhibition building and the visitors. I describe the exhibition and the works and offer more in-depth analyses of some of the paintings and the series of photography on display. Through an extensive theoretical discussion of atmosphere as an aesthetic concept, I argue that the displayed works are at once confirming and renouncing their singular characteristics. By contributing to the creation of the exhibition atmosphere, they reach out into the environment and give off some of their character as artefacts. Attended by the ubiquitous Lynchian sound, the exhibition thus creates a sense of immersion. My overall point is that *The Air is on Fire* could be understood as blurring boundaries between an exhibition and an installation and thus could be considered a work in itself. In the last part of the chapter, I discuss the creation of atmosphere in two scenes from *Lost Highway* . My point here is to show how the mise en scène and the blurring of boundaries between dreams and reality can be used to create a dense atmosphere which powerfully interrupts the unfolding narrative and takes on a life of its own.

Chapter 3, “David Lynch and Time—Textures of Ageing ”, addresses the question of time in David Lynch’s work. It has often been said that Lynch always complicates our sense of time to the extent that time dissolves altogether. However, in this chapter I argue that this is not always the case. David Lynch is in many works occupied with the passing of time. My point, however, is that he never constructs time as simply straight-out linear. Departing from a Lynch quote about the beauty in nature’s changing of the surface of artefacts over time and

contemplating the way Lynch has used terms like texture and abstraction, I subsequently engage with what I have called *textures of ageing* in different parts of the works. Drawing on scholarly work on the (industrial) ruin and the palimpsest, I discuss two different clusters of images: images of the traces of time passing on industrial buildings and outer spaces and the traces of time passing on the ageing body. First, I discuss David Lynch's great black and white photographs of deserted factory buildings and his series of melting snowmen. After that, I turn to images of older people in Lynch's works. I discuss how the close-ups of Alvin's ageing face in *The Straight Story* show time's passing as a disorderly network of lines. Moreover, I discuss the construction of the passing of time by Lynch's use of a range of the same actors and actresses, now aged by 25 years, in *Twin Peaks: The Return.* I argue that revisiting the actors and actresses pays tribute to the visible traces of time's passing on organic and inorganic matter. Lynch's textures of ageing thus oppose contemporary culture's praise of youth and the elimination of the signs of ageing by different (cosmeceutical) means.

In the following two chapters, I engage with Lynch's use of the affordances of digital technology and media. In Chap. 4, "David Lynch and the Digital", I mainly discuss two digital works, the *Interview Project* and *Inland Empire* . The two works utilise digital media and technology in very different ways. *The Interview Project* is a website (hosted by David Lynch), which can be seen to experiment with a new form of documentary. It consists of 121 small documentary portraits, including photography and written text, which are all introduced by Lynch. By using the website's possibilities, Lynch (together with his son Austin Lynch and his crew) thus creates what I call an intermedia documentary. Additionally, this part of the chapter continues the discussion of time from Chap. 3 by contemplating the many temporalities on the site. Just like in *The Straight Story*, this intermedia documentary deploys a sense of continuous time (the time to travel across the US to meet with people), but at the same time it also constitutes a more discontinuous time by virtue of the website's interactive affordances.

Whereas the *Interview Project* offers images of a documentary real, I discuss *Inland Empire* as a disturbing vision of a screened real, in which

boundaries are constantly dissolving, not only between the screened and the real but between different screened worlds and times. I also venture into a reflection on the blurring of boundaries between different forms of image projections and their attendant temporalities (real-time projections, recorded projections, projections of surveillance images). Whereas I discuss strategies for procuring a sense of documentary real on the *Interview Project* website, I regard *Inland Empire* as a film which creates a contemporary, confusing and disparate *mediated real*.

Chapter 5, "David Lynch and Visual Noise", goes into other examples of Lynch works which explore the affordances of digital equipment. First, I look into short films, which Lynch himself has called experiments, and secondly I discuss the 15-minute commercial *Lady Blue Shanghai* for Dior. Finally, I engage in two of the music videos included in Lynch's work, *Crazy Clown Time* and *I Have a Radio* . Common to this diversity of works is that they all experiment with the audio and the visual. Drawing in particular on scholarship on sound and noise but also writing on the image and haptic sensibility, I think through what I call *visual noise* in these works. I argue that Lynch's experiments with the transformation of the representational image into abstract, blurred patterns—reminiscent of the textured surfaces I discuss in Chap. 3—create worlds by other means. I also return to the discussion of atmospheres which I started in the second chapter. I point out how visual noise affects the body and creates a sense of immersion which is more profound and more challenging than "ordinary" transparent film language is able to—not least due to "noise's " particular ability to create space and atmosphere.

In Chap. 6, "David Lynch and the Fragment", I engage with Lynch's often-used term "fragment". I argue that it makes sense to go back to the theory of the early Romantic writers, and in particular Friedrich Schlegel , to think through the fragments in Lynch's work. Starting from a discussion about Schlegel's seminal late eighteenth-century writing about the fragment as well as some of the more recent discussions of this concept, I delineate four different kinds of fragments in Lynch's fictional works. I argue that one point to take away from this chapter is that using the fragment as an analytical point of departure helps remove the focus from looking for—impossible—coherences and

instead to focus on how the fragmented structure contributes to creating the affective atmospheres with which David Lynch's work is so rich.

Finally, in Chap. 7, "David Lynch and Fear—the Uncanny and the Sublime", I engage with the ways in which Lynch creates feelings of fear. I take up Freud's theory of the uncanny (*das Unheimliche*), which I have done before just like many other Lynch scholars. However, what is not particularly usual, at least within the film and media studies literature, let alone the Lynch literature, is that I go into Freud's predecessor Ernst Jentsch's discussion about the uncanny, and I also outline the rich discussion concerning Freud's reading of E.T.A. Hoffmann's novel "The Sandman" (Der Sandmann). I have two points connected to this delving into Freud's text. The first point is to suggest that Freud's and Jentsch's texts can be applied to textual analysis of fear without carrying along the whole psychological and psychoanalytic system of ideas upon which they rely. The second is to demonstrate that the theoretical explanations of what brings about the uncanny can usefully be combined with close textual analysis. Thus, this part of the chapter involves a short shot-to-shot analysis of two of the famous mirror scenes in *Twin Peaks*. The last part of the chapter's discussion of the uncanny goes into the notion of the "home", *das Heimliche*, in *Twin Peaks: The Return.*

As for the sublime, I return to classic aesthetic theory once more. I am interested in this concept, which has always been connected with complex feelings of awe and the fear of losing oneself when confronted with the greatness in nature. I engage with some of the concept's classic positions, which apply perfectly to Lynch's audio-visual aesthetics of the sublime. The sublime offers visions of the limitless. By discussing examples of sublime imagery in Lynch's work, I add to the book's overall discussion of the blurring of boundaries and the construction of affective images. The sublime images challenge the perception of scale and distance. Hence, their incomprehensibility destabilises whichever firm and distanced position the viewer would expect. Although by different means, sublime and uncanny imageries challenge stable subject positions in a mediated world just like *Inland Empire* does by other means. I end this chapter by discussing the White Sands atomic bomb explosion in *Twin Peaks: The Return*. Besides being a mind-

blowing, fantastic piece of audio-visual art, it shows the way Lynch creates feelings of fear and awe by aesthetically combining an uncanny sense of claustrophobia with the sublime's sense of the vertiginous vastness.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_2

2. Lynchian Atmospheres: About and Around *The Air Is on Fire* (2007): An Installational Exhibition

Anne Jerslev[1]
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anne Jerslev
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

There are things about painting that are true for everything in life. That's the way painting is. Music is also one of those things. There are things that can't be said with words. And that's sort of what painting is all about. And that's what film-making, to me, is mostly about.
—Lynch in Rodley (2005 [1997]: 26–27)
See, the thing is, I love the idea that one thing can be different for different people.
—Lynch in Rodley (2005 [1997]: 63)

The Lynch Exhibition at the Fondation Cartier in Paris, France

Le Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is sitauted in Jean Nouvel's at once simple and sophisticated nine-storey modernist glass and grey steel building from 1994 on Boulevard Raspail, Montparnasse, Paris. Housing an exhibition area on the ground and basement floors and offices on the remaining floors, the Fondation Cartier hosted the

first comprehensive David Lynch exhibition in Europe, *The Air is on Fire*, from March 3 to May 27, 2007. The chief curator was Hervé Chandès and David Lynch participated during the whole process. *The Air is on Fire* displayed (mixed media) paintings, drawings in many media and with many different techniques, photographs and a few sculptures. Additionally, there was a small cinema, complete with red velvet curtains and black and white zigzag floor—which in this exhibition context blurred boundaries between cinema and video installation—and another installation, which consisted of a sitting room with back exit rooms.[1] Most of this chapter takes the form of a reflection upon *The Air is on Fire* as an intermedial space and what I argue could be called an *installational exhibition*. I reflect upon how the visitor is involved and immersed and how a certain atmosphere is created in this space. I argue throughout this book that atmosphere is a prominent characteristic not only of the exhibition but also of Lynch's audio-visual spaces. Therefore, in the last part of the chapter I go into a couple of examples (from *Blue Velvet* and *Lost Highway*) of the ways in which atmosphere is created aesthetically, by means of formal strategies. Finally, I end the chapter with a short reflection upon Lynch's work as a *total work* .

Lynch designed the exhibition mise en scène in this building with transparent walls, which was never thought of as a "white box", as explained by the director of collections at the Fondation Cartier, Grazia Quaroni. On the contrary, the Fondation Cartier exhibition building is a place in which "artists are invited to rethink the space and think about how to reinvent the architecture".[2] The Fondation Cartier building is made with "a maximum of glass and a minimum of grey steel" (Morgan 1998: 149). The entrance is accessed between two high glass walls, which together with the prolongation of the glass on the front and back of the core building gives the impression of a bulletproof shell protecting the Cartier shrine. Between the large glass walls and the building is an open space with green vegetation of different heights and the famous "Tree of Liberty" planted by French author and politician François-René de Chateaubriand more than 200 years ago. This space leads to the garden area at the back of the building, which is also designed to remind us of natural green vegetation. Hence, despite being situated on a busy road, the building is surrounded by greenery. The

“series of overlapping transparent layers” of glass (ibid.)—the refined glass building, the two glass walls side by side and the “protecting” prolongation of the building’s glass facade to the front and back—thus create a complicated, at once transparent and reflecting structure, in which the Boulevard Raspail and the visitor are multiple mirrored. Furthermore, the exhibition title on the front is mirrored, and so is the whole ground-floor exhibition space. Jean Nouvel has himself said about the complicated mirroring effect: “I sometimes wonder if I’m seeing the building or the image of the building, if Cartier is about transparency or about reflection” (in Morgan 1998: 151, see also Martin 2014: viii–ix). Hence, the mirroring effects blur boundaries between interior and exterior, between the exhibition space and the urban space, between nature and culture—and between visitor and participant.[3] Moreover, the blurring of boundaries and the unbounded spatial environment look different depending on the different kinds of light during the day and at night.

On the glass facade next to the entrance, the name David Lynch was written in abstract and slightly blurred electrifying white and lilac neon letters (Illustration 2.1). The rather cold neon light and the design of the letters called to mind both the many neon signs and the abundance of electric, often blinding discharges and static everywhere in Lynch’s works. Moreover, the sign gave the impression of Lynch’s personal signature and framed the exhibition within “Brand Lynch” (Todd 2012). As such, the visitor was made aware from the beginning of this exhibition that it was in itself a work reverberating within the totality of the Lynch *oeuvre*.

Illustration 2.1 The exhibition front with *David Lynch* in lilac neon. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

The transparent and airy, yet also solid glass architecture—with less steel being used for the ground floor—and the cool title sign formed in many ways a contrast to the interior staging of the exhibition, which, as one entered, appeared compact, rough and somewhat messy. The two large ground-floor rooms each had their own distinct mise en scène, one colourful, the other bleak, grey and black. However, characteristic of both rooms was that the hanging of the paintings was in itself conspicuous, different from the classical wall hanging, which is based on the logic of the singular work in a "white" room and hence omits anything that might disturb the feeling of looking at a self-sufficient piece. Standing on the grey concrete floor in both rooms was solid black iron scaffolding, which in one room held up large coloured curtains in front of which the paintings hung and also carried loudspeakers. In the other ground-floor room, rough, grey, slightly textured canvas screens

carried the paintings. Moreover, smaller and thinner sculpture-like metal sticks on the floor had buttons that functioned interactively to procure more sound when activated. In all, seven such "trigger stations" were scattered across the exhibition rooms.[4] Moreover, the characteristic Lynchian acoustics contributed to this clash between the displayed art works and the other objects dominating the rooms (the large rough metal scaffolding and the large curtains that divided the room). A sonic environment (Schafer 1994 [1977]) was designed for the exhibition by David Lynch and long-time sound collaborator Dean Hurley, who started to work with Lynch shortly before *The Air is on Fire*. Everywhere in the rooms on the ground floor, the noises of the familiar Lynchian low bass drone sounded, the sounds of thunder and other indistinctive noises crept into the body with a sense of vibrating physicality. Moreover, the soundscape created a feeling of a unified exhibition space, in which the visitor was immersed. Coming into the exhibition's ground-floor rooms felt like being plunged into a Lynchian world, being surrounded by an atmosphere that was familiar and unfamiliar at one and the same time.

In the ground-floor room with the large grey canvases (Illustration 2.2), a series of sombre works were displayed. These were all dark, bleak paintings in black and earthy colours centred around the theme of the house and the nocturnal landscape, often painted with horizontal strokes that made sky and ground as well as day and night merge and figures float in the air, as in *Here I Am—Me as a House* (1990) or the disproportionate matchstick figures in *That's Me in Front of My House* (1988). Titles were pasted in separate cut-out capital letters in distinct patterns and placed in different ways onto the surface of many of the paintings (for example, on *Suddenly My House Became a Tree of Sores* (2000), *Here I Am—Me as a House* (1990), *That's Me in Front of My House* (1988), *Shadow of a Twisted Hand Across My House* (1988) and *Billy Finds a Book of Riddles Right in His Own Backyard* (1992)). However, the room also displayed tempera on cardboard works like *Prince of the Air* and *My Head is Disconnected* (both undated), upon which the title was written in rough strokes.

Illustration 2.2 Exhibition interior (grey room). Art works: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

To Lynch himself, the prominence of words in his works has to do with "shape" and not primarily with the anchoring of the meaning of an image. The written words get their own visual life in the paintings:

> And a lot of times, the words excite me as shapes, and something'll grow out of that. I used to cut these little letters out and glue them on. They just look good all lined up like teeth. I'd glue them on with this stuff that reminds me of ointment. The words change the way you perceive what's happening in the picture. And they're a nice balance to other things going on. And sometimes they become the title of the painting (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 22).[5]

All the large works in this room were hanging in front of very tall rough grey canvas partitions, which were painted in order to provide a feeling

of old, worn canvas. They created a sense of texture and temporality, which I will return to in the next chapter. Altogether the conspicuous hanging provided a feeling of wandering into a shaped environment, in which the exhibition space itself was a work just as much as—or in collaboration with—the paintings. Moreover, the hanging made the visitors contribute to the construction of the entire room as a total environment made up of everything in it, including the visitors as both subjects and objects. We were not only visiting the room but were immersed in this bleak atmosphere as a three-dimensional totality—bodily, acoustically, visually. I return to this spatial construction below and how it may be conceived as contributing to the exhibition space as an installation.

Characteristic of the rough and sombre paintings in this room was the simple sketching of the houses and figures. They are thin matchstick people and matchstick houses, whose slender outlines almost disappear into the opaque and dense blackness and leave an impression of an extremely fragile space: slight houses that do not provide shelter and are hardly homes and people who can barely stand up on their long, thin legs, who have no firm anchorage in space and tend to dissolve into the dark and bleak surroundings. As for the exhibition's water colours with similar motives, the houses (in *House Burning with Dead Man* and *House*) look a bit more solid, but still dark and dismal, uncommunicative and uninhabitable.[6] Finally, on display was the black and grey watercolour drawing *Rain* from 2005. It is just 15 x 22.5 cm but looks uncannily monumental with its black monolithic cloud and the black threads of rain beneath which look like spores from a gigantic floating fungus or the terrifying aftermath of an atomic explosion. The conspicuous black capital letters RAIN at the bottom contribute to the feeling of a sombre, almost apocalyptic atmosphere.

However, this bleak atmosphere was replaced with a much lighter feeling when one left the somewhat oppressive labyrinthic space in the middle of the room and went to the walls where lit-up exhibition cases (vitrines constructed by Lynch) showed hundreds of Lynch's tiny drawings, sketches and notes on napkins, on post-it notes, on torn-off pieces of paper from notebooks, on matchboxes, on pieces of newspaper, etc. These drawings were exhibited for the very first time. Despite giving the appearance of being quickly and randomly scribbled

in diverse everyday contexts, they also radiate (black) energy and appear as fields of power. Some of these small works might be sketches for coming works, or just graphic, geometrical shapes or abstract renditions of electricity. Eye-catching and exuding energy among the many, many drawings on random pieces of paper (or doodles (O'Hagan 2007)) was a small rectangle drawn in a thick black line and filled in with a clear, almost luminous red. Around the rectangle was a pencil-shaded approximately 1 cm grey field, which in a strange way gave the rectangle a feeling of depth and made it seem like a distant exit opening towards a fire.

The small piece of paper also had some more geometrical scribbles drawn on it, as well as a woman's name and a phone number. However, the tiny red abstraction struck me as a condensed image of the power of David Lynch's whole work and the atmosphere radiating from it: a tiny quivering, electrified cube of energy.[7] Correspondingly, energy is what comes across in some very early colour drawings reminiscent of Kandinsky, one of Lynch's heroes. They are sketched with thin ink pens (each measuring approximately 23 x 30 cm) and show instances of explosions, which Lynch has himself called "cosmic explosions and shapes in the cosmos" (McKenna 2007: 25).[8] Despite, or maybe because of, the delicately drawn lines, it looks like an explosive power blows different objects into bits and pieces and scatters them like missiles or forceful electric waves in all directions.

Moving around in the rooms felt like walking around on a stage set. The colourful room was divided by large, folded and rather heavy curtains in dusty blue, yellow and red-orange colours (Illustration 2.3), which contrasted starkly with the transparent glass architecture and the outside greenery.[9] The curtains did not divide the large room into entirely separate spaces, so they did not block the view neither to the surrounding works nor the exterior. This colourful ground-floor room displayed an abundance of large mixed-media paintings. These were oil paintings, on which Lynch, besides using rough brushstrokes, has attributed a diversity of different materials, such as fragments of photographs, and a variety of objects, from dices to pieces of small animal bones, and from pieces of Band-Aid to matchsticks and light bulbs.

Illustration 2.3 Exhibition interior with coloured curtains. Art works: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Just as in the first room, a sentence or the title of the work was written across the surface of many of the paintings, horizontally, vertically or diagonally. The letters were slightly clumsy. Some of them were overwritten, reminiscent of the way wrong letters on a typewritten note were erased with white ink at the time of the typewriter before the correction ribbon.[10] Some of the large mixed-media paintings provided a cartoon-like and slightly stereotypical impression. This goes, for example, for the large *Do You Know What I Really Think?* (2003). The title is also written on the painting and is apparently the question asked by the man in the painting who, with a knife in his hand, is standing opposite an almost naked woman sitting on a couch in front of him. Her answer, "No", is pasted onto the surface outside her mouth like a cartoon speech bubble. The painting is in a sense made to say words or emit sounds, just like it mimics a speech

act's succession of question and answer. So, even without the image frames that create temporal continuity in the cartoon, the work blurs the lines between painting and cartoon.

Written sentences appear to have other functions as well, like increasing the atmosphere in a painting. This is true, for example, for the large mixed-media painting *Mister Redman* (2000, 163 x 203 cm), which depicts an enormous red animal-like monster. It is red-hot with anger or aggression and its stomach seems to burst open and black smoke and reddish matter gush out—which apparently results in the small figure to the right exclaiming "Oh no!". To the upper right side of the painting is pasted a folded curtain made of corrugated cardboard, while the painting's extreme field of energy is concentrated around the creature's body on the left side. The use of dark paint strokes, which enclose it, the dark smoke that emanates from it and the weird handwritten text in black letters—"Because of wayward activity based upon unproductive thinking, BOB meets mister REDMAN"—contribute to the feeling of dangerous energy emanating from this figure. The text does not anchor the painting's meaning, but it adds an additional layer of weirdness to the already weird painting.

On display in this room was also the disturbing mixed-media sculptural painting *Rock with Seven Eyes* (Illustration 2.4), which shows a three-dimensional shiny black compact lump (which Hoberman (2014) has described as "a black tumor or turd") with seven glass eyes encircled by an orange skin-like colour protruding from the lump's surface. The shiny lump is placed on an orange background. Because of the protruding eyes, the formless solid matter gives off a sense of vibration. It is as if the compact mass is a living thing, which blurs boundaries between living and dead, between some kind of monstruous living being and inanimate matter. Likewise, the mixed-media work blurs boundaries between painting and sculpture, as did many other works in the exhibition.

Illustration 2.4 Close-up of *Rock with Seven Eyes*. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Some of Lynch's largest paintings were set in golden frames—apparently inspired by a Francis Bacon exhibition Lynch attended in the late 1960s. They were placed in front of the curtains (besides *Mister Redman* , these included works like *Rock with Seven Eyes* (1996), *Bob Finds Himself in a World for Which He Has No Understanding* (2000), *Well… I Can Dream, Can't I* (2004), *Wajunga Red Dog* (2005) and *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago* (2004)) —in addition to a series of paintings from the year 2000, which have the three letters B O B written somewhere on the surface. The paintings are so large that they must be viewed at a distance in order to take them in in their entirety. Yet they are so detailed and filled with small objects glued to the surface that they also need to be looked at close up.[11] Moreover, the paintings interacted both with the coloured curtains in front of which they were hanging and the other curtains in the room and gave the

visitors' movements in the room a sensuous feeling. The theatrical hanging added to the three-dimensionality of the mixed-media characteristics of the paintings and blurred boundaries between work and surrounding. However, the paintings hanging in front of the heavy stage curtains, "an intrinsic part of Lynch's architecture" (Martin 2014: 142), also had a value of their own.

Curtain forms pop up everywhere in Lynch's paintings and drawings, just like in his films. They are either painted or made in different materials and attached to the painted surface, like we are looking in on a staged world in the paintings, just like everywhere else in the exhibition. Curtains can at once reveal and conceal (Fisher 2016), open and close, separate spaces and create passages between spaces (in Lynch most prominently in the Red Room in the *Twin Peaks* works). Just like a range of other visual and auditory elements in the exhibition, they stretch out to his films. This ubiquitous resonance and the strong intertextual feel contributed—besides the exhibition architecture and the building's architecture—to the creation of the exhibition space as a space of blurred boundaries without firm demarcations.

In one of the large basement rooms without windows, Lynch built "a sixty-square-meter-large installation" (Platthaus 2009: 275), a cavernous, strange and disturbingly dimensioned sitting room—or what Spies (2010) calls "eine Schleuse aus Traum und Stimmung", a sluice of dream and atmosphere—from which two openings seemed to lead deeper into the cavern. More precisely, the exits led to the exterior part of the larger basement room in which the installation was erected. Here, on the walls outside the sitting room installation, hung Lynch's series of *Distorted Nudes* , digitally manipulated Victorian erotic photographs in which bodies are transformed into dismembered, disabled, deformed, headless, limb-less female figures. Some of the uncanny bodies are reminiscent of the paintings of distorted bodies by Francis Bacon, who David Lynch has remarked again and again is his "number one kinda hero painter" (for example, in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 16).[12]

The scale of the sitting room installation (Illustration 2.5) was a bit smaller than a normal sitting room and the multicoloured patterning of all surfaces contributed to the slightly dizzying feeling in this room. All surfaces were painted in bright colours, the floor red and black, the

ceiling yellow and green, and the walls blue and yellow. The exit passages to the exterior of the installation room were yellow, with large simply painted greeneries and two coloured sculptures standing on the floor. One of the sculptures was reminiscent of a cactus with a somewhat human-like form. It had on top of one of the yellow branches a pink flower-like round 'thing' that somewhat resembled a bundle of intestines. The other sculpture was yellow with a green top, reminiscent of Lynch's thin organic-branch-without-leaves-like lamps.[13] A red button protruded from a side branch. Pushing it activated a mix of everyday noises that mingled with the overall soundscape and created its own noise environment in the installation.

Illustration 2.5 The sitting room installation. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

Lynch has himself said of the sound activated here and the atmosphere created that:

> [w]hat Dean [Hurley] and I were trying to do was get weather in here, winds, rain, old radio stations, and footsteps, high-heeled shoes you kind of hear from this interior. So, I guess you are feeling maybe going back in time or being cosy inside a place.[14]

So, a slightly claustrophobic cacophony of sounds, noises and music filled the air in the sitting room. The sounds and noises contributed to the construction of the enveloping atmosphere (Nechvatal 2011) in this exhibition/installation and reminded one of the immersive power of sound. As sound professor and artist Salomé Voegelin has written, "sound is always the heard, immersive and present" (Voegelin 2010: xiv). The room looked like a stage set and felt uncanny in the exact sense of Freud's definition (to which I return in Chap. 7): the familiar turned unfamiliar.

Outside the installation hung an undated, tiny sketch of the very same installation. The idea was, as Lynch explained to Kristine McKenna, that "you'll walk into the drawing" (McKenna 2007: 21).[15] It was as if Lynch literally translated the way perspective—a three-dimensional spatiality—is drawn on a piece of paper. Just like figures are smaller in the background of a drawn room, the height to the ceiling was literally shorter at the end with the two exit passages than where one entered the room at the front opening ("from full scale in the front and then forced perspective will have to make you duck to go into these back doors", Lynch explained (in McKenna 2007: 21)). Hence, one's body felt like it was growing uncannily as it moved towards the exit end of the installation, just like it was perceived as disproportionally big for the room by the other visitors. Visitors were therefore made more visible to each other. The slightly distorted sitting room installation showed how moving around in a space like this constituted a dynamic pattern of choreographed movements by bodies who were not only visitors in a room but participated in the creation of the room. Finally, the installation emphasized that *The Air is on Fire* was in itself a scenography created for the movement of bodies.

The distorted proportions provided different impressions according to where you placed yourself and depending upon whether you came from one end into the living room or had to bend to enter it from one of the back spaces. Apart from that, the disturbing feeling of

disorientation was enhanced by the two pieces of furniture in the room. A sofa and an armchair, both striped black and white, stood on round black and white abstractly patterned carpets. The clash between the lavish colours on the walls and ceiling and the strangely uncoloured furniture added to the confusing perception of the spatial proportions an uncanny bodily feeling of a distorted space, of being inside a room and looking at a drawn room from the outside at one and the same time. What added to the difficulty of getting a foothold was a disconcerting mixture of furniture, which seemed at once strangely two-dimensional (like thick marker on paper drawn furniture) and three-dimensional (like real furniture on a designed set space). The real material furniture provided a perceptual impression of something flat and uninhabitable, a drawn two-dimensionality within this real space, similar to the doubling of curtains in some of the paintings. They were at once real things and drawn representations, at once outside the installation and partaking of it—at once representations and presentations of stages and worlds to go into.[16]

In a similar gesture to real-life ordinary objects made strange, one also found a couple of sculptures made in collaboration with shoe designer Christian Louboutin: a pair of impossibly high-heeled patent leather shoes (adjoined by the heels) and another, fur-like shoe also with an absurd high silver heel. These shoe sculptures were obviously paying tribute to surrealism, one of Lynch's recurrent references (see Mactaggart 2010).[17]

The other room on the lower floor housed the small cinema installation, a box built by Lynch for the exhibition to provide an atmosphere of an old cinema, complete with classical Greek columns, a curtain, a black and white zigzag floor reminiscent of the floor in the Red Room in the *Twin Peaks* works and, in addition, green vegetation along the screen platform in between the floor and the armchairs. Here some of Lynch's early short films were screened (*The Grandmother* (1970), *The Amputee* (1974), *The Alphabet* (1969) as well as some of the animated shorts (from *Dumbland* (2002)). Although the screen was flat, the cinema also showed *Six Men Getting Sick* (*Six Times)*, Lynch's first work from 1967, which has been called a "motion sculpture" and a "hybrid artwork rather than 'the first film'" by Robert Cozzolino (2014: 14) and "Lynch's first cine-organism" by Justus Nieland (2012: 115). *Six*

Men Getting Sick was an approximately one-minute animated film in red, blue lilac and purple colours. It was projected in a loop six times on a sculptured screen of six male faces (three projected, three plaster cast faces (of Lynch himself and his close collaborator and friend Jack Fisk)), who end up vomiting incessantly to the sound of a howling siren (see Nieland 2012: 114–119 and also, for example, Spies 2009: 36–37).

On the walls in the rather dark basement room, in the middle of which stood the cinema, Lynch's photography was displayed. The hanging was more similar to an ordinary photo exhibition, the photos placed side by side on a bare wall illuminated directly by spotlights hanging from the ceiling. However, because of the clash between the dark and the strong light on the photographs, the dark room inhabited a dramatic atmosphere in stark contrast to the solid spatial atmosphere on the ground floor. The spotlights were illuminating the photographs, in order for them to be seen as separate works, but they also created a particular atmosphere of "lightness" over the row of equally large squares, an atmosphere of "a space that surrounds us" (Böhme 2017: 199) more than a making surfaces visible (see also Bille 2019).

On display were Lynch's black and white photographs of wasted and deserted urban and industrial wastelands with their close-ups of the remnants of the people who had once populated the abandoned buildings.[18] There were bleak black and white photographs of half-melted snowmen on winter-dreary front lawns of worn-out suburban houses.[19] And finally, there were photographs from the *Nudes* series that consisted of black and white and colour photos of close-ups and ultra-close-ups of female body parts. Some of the colour photos are hyper-sharp, but many border on abstraction, partly because of the impossible camera distance, partly because of the lightning, which leaves body parts in shadow.[20]

One more work stands out, *Untitled* from 1985, a pastel on paper of *Eraserhead*'s baby, measuring 75 x 106 cm and drawn in different delicate shades of grey. As in many other works in this exhibition, there is a roughly drawn, folded curtain to the right so that the baby seems to be put on display on a theatrical stage. However, remarkably, it is deprived of the gauze and we are offered a view into the inside intestinal world of this abject baby from the 1977 film. Even without the protective gauze, it does not fall apart and seems so much more

coherent than the unformed mass of bowels and a strange foamy substance that is disclosed when Henry cuts open the gauze in *Eraserhead*. Apparently, a transparent membrane keeps the intestines in place in this drawing, and in a strange way, the baby seems alive. Just like in *Eraserhead* , black liquid spurts upwards from behind the teeth of the closed mouth. However, in contrast to the abundance of black liquid splashing from the baby's mouth in the film, it is just a couple of tiny, elegantly formed splashes of blackness.

This delicate pastel in grey nuances shows no sign of the total disintegration of the baby we see in *Eraserhead* . But it seems just as fragile and lonely, not least because it is exhibited on a stage. Even though it was displayed under a harsh and direct, almost theatrical spotlight in the film, it was Henry who was looking at it from a distance in a private room. In the exhibition context, it was scrutinized by anonymous gazes. Moreover, it was not wrapped in the protective gauze that might prevent the curious eye from looking inside, and it was even put on stage in front of an audience like John Merrick in *The Elephant Man* . The drawing calls to mind the circus and the freak show in *The Elephant Man* , which Dr Treves once accessed both curious and disgusted. Here too, the drawing redirects the gaze towards the viewer —as participant and accomplice.

Overall, the impression gained from wandering through the exhibition was like being thrown into a field of energy, an immersive environment of media and sound, in which the works were talking among each other and with the visitors, who filled the in-between spaces. It felt like Lynch's entire cinematic world was there but in a new way and in different media, as if a new Lynch world had been opened. The exhibition offered an intermedia encounter that expanded the Lynch *oeuvre* and made it clear that David Lynch should not be called a film director who also makes other stuff. *The Air is on Fire* is a Lynch work in its own right. So before going into one of the central pieces in the exhibition, I will turn to the concept of intermediality.

Intermediality

As is evident from my description of *The Air is on Fire* exhibition, Lynch works in and across many different media. He is truly an intermedia

artist and has himself said that "film brings most mediums together" (in Nieland 2012: 162). In trying to conceptualize *The Air is on Fire*, I am not only interested in drawing out the characteristics of Lynch's paintings as mixed media, that is, works that use more than one medium (cf. Higgins 2001 [1981]: 52; Mitchell 1994). Neither am I only interested in drawing attention to the "impurity"[21] of the paintings, which mix the visual and the written, i.e. Lynch's aesthetic practice of pasting words onto his paintings and drawings. I am interested in conceptualizing the intermediality of this exhibition as an *interaction* between different media. Moreover, I am interested in the way intermediality creates a particular space or *environment*, in which the visitors are involved. In *The Air is on Fire*, this space came alive, as it were, by means of the viewing subjects wandering around the exhibition space. Hereby they created still new relationships between the works, accompanied by the noise—including the human voice—that filled the space from different sources and reminded us not only that noise is without borders but also that "[n]oise is formless yet spatial in its concentration on the listening body" (Voegelin 2010: 67). The sound/noise and the bodily movements created a dynamic space in which the different works connected, at the same time as boundaries between them were blurred and redrawn depending upon the viewers' wandering and position in the exhibition environment. Together, the large curtains in the central ground floor room, which were doubled in paintings and drawings, the interactive possibilities—press a button to get more sound, go into the distorted sitting room or sit down in the cinema to watch an early Lynch short—and the many reflections of the ground-floor exhibition space and the viewers in it through the doubled glass walls created a space which was at once coherent and without clear confines.

A simple definition of intermediality is "the interaction within and between different media" (Verstraete 2010: 9). This definition is complicated by Christian Emden and Gabriele Rippl who, in their introduction to *ImageScapes*, define intermediality as "a complex and highly dynamic set of relationships among different media" (2010: 10). And James O'Sullivan follows up on this understanding of intermediality by claiming that "[i]n essence, it refers to the ways in which different media interact within a wider cultural environment"

(2017: 288). I agree with these latter definitions. What is important is that they not only focuses on the relationship between different media but on the *dynamic* relationship and the contexts, which produce and affect the process as well as the outcome of intermedial communications and interaction. Intermediality is a particular communicative practice in which boundaries between media's distinguishing specificities are blurred. The definitions also invoke the in-between spaces that characterize this intermedia environment: interstices for the attribution of meaning by viewers, visitors and users.

Many intermedia scholars agree that intermediality is in a sense a tautology: there is no such thing as a "pure" medium (Schröter 2010, 2011; Nagib 2014; Pethö 2011). Every text and every medium is essentially mixed—as W.J.T. Mitchell has repeatedly put it, "all media are mixed media" (for example, Mitchell 1994; Mitchell 2005: 260). This conceptualization of intermediality as a norm is what Schröter (2011) calls *ontological intermediality*, or, as Elleström puts it, intermediality is a "precondition for all mediality" (2010: 4).

However, studies of intermediality tend to focus either on how different media coalesce and interfere *across* media (for example, in cross-media studies, i.e. the studies of the communication *across* two or more media (platforms)), or how media may merge *within* one medium (Bruhn 2016; Pethö 2011; Nagib 2014). For example, Agnes Pethö (2011) regards intermediality as both a defining characteristic of cinema as a medium and a specific cinematic strategy in particular works, in which the traces of one medium in another can be analysed as particular formal figurations (see also Nagib 2014). Pethö is interested in textual traces and rhetorical and semiotic approaches to intermediality. Her "in-between" is the dynamics that arises between text forms.

In line with Pethö, Jürgen Heinrichs and Yvonne Spielmann, in their editorial to *Convergence*'s 2002 issue on intermediality, stick to the tradition of intermediality studies as textual studies of clashes between different medialities' aesthetic affordances. Even though they talk about border crossings between what they call "traditional" and "contemporary" media, they are not occupied with the dynamics of space. To Heinrichs and Spielmann, intermediality is a textual dynamic that comes about through the fusion between media: "the merger and

the transformation of elements of differing media […] transformations that alter existing media forms by inserting new elements" (2002: 5, 6). It is an entirely new form, they argue. It is not just an adding up of the different media involved, but "a new, mixed form that is more than the sum of its parts" (2002: 6). This particular intermedia dynamic can be analysed by textual methods.

In contrast to these intermediality scholars, who are mostly interested in the construction of intermediality *within* a single work, I am interested in intermediality as a dynamics in space *between* media and works, the approach Pethö in her systematization calls "*[i]ntermediality described in spatial terms as a transitory or impossible 'place'*" (2011: 42—italics in original). I am occupied with intermediality as "border zones", "in-between places" or "passageways" (ibid.: 42–43), the ways different media co-create an environment and an atmosphere as a result of the work of an artist, the contributions of an audience and a specific space. One such intermedia space was *The Air is on Fire*. I regard the construction of a "dynamic set of relations between different media" as the *communicative acts* that took place in the exhibition and involved the spatial interaction and the creation of an atmosphere between works and viewers. I quoted Lynch at the beginning of this chapter for loving the idea of a diversity of experiences of a work. This certainly applies to *The Air is on Fire*, which invited the viewers to wander the exhibition in their own ways and make their own set of communicative and affective relations in the intermedia environment. One example of the creation of a dynamic space between a work and a viewer/visitor was the large painting *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago* (2004).

This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago (2004)[22]

This large painting measures 152.4 × 296 cm (Illustration 2.6). It is created, in the manner of many of Lynch's other large paintings, using various techniques and materials, including cloth and incorporating objects like a watch and a cellphone. It shows a man, placed in front of the entrance to an anonymous and apparently hermetically sealed

building, whose flat anonymity is meticulously painted in order to give the impression of an unwelcoming building, which refuses to give shelter to this man.[23] The man's entrails are like "a phallic string of guts" (Bowen 2019), splattering explosively outwards from his chest, and his spirit is leaving his body, as indicated by a written caption. The man's face is primitively formed of thick layers of paint, the eyes appearing as round black holes in the clay-like face and the mouth wide open into a dark hole. Just like in many of Lynch's other painterly works and drawings, the title of the work corresponds to the text on the upper right-hand side of the canvas, *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago.* However, two of the written words, "shot" and "0.9502", seem to have been altered for some reason. On the one hand, this indexical trace connected with time contradicts the immediacy inscribed in the painting and the imaginary participatory viewing position. On the other hand, the inscription of the manifest traces of the work as a process, the traces of a hesitant hand obeying the change of mind of its bearer, may even enhance the feeling of the painter being close and the painting coming into being in the moment of watching.

Illustration 2.6 *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago*. Art work: © David Lynch. Photography: © Patrick Gries for Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

The wide-open mouth is recurrent in Lynch's paintings and drawings, and mostly it takes two different forms. Either it appears as in this painting, i.e. a dark hole, which, because of its almost childlike simplicity, is made to express a range of dark emotions, anger, pain or fear,[24] or thick liquid erupts violently from the mouth like a never-ending flood of vomit—going back to Lynch's very first work *Six Men Getting Sick* (1967), which epitomizes Lynch's intermedia endeavour from early on.

The eruptive power that seems to emanate from the figures' open mouths in these works attaches to the paintings a kind of indistinct sound, like the sound of an inner mental state, the splashing of bodily spasms or the sound of agony. This imaginary sound is prominent in many of Lynch's early paintings, but also in later works like the mixed media on wood panel work *Figure #3—Man Talking* (2009) and the mixed media on paper works *Girl Crying* and *Head Talking About Billy*, both from 2010.[25] The latter shows a distorted, half-blackened head with an open mouth from which bursts a black matter—just like a black thickness erupts from the girl's eyes in *Girl Crying*. Besides the dark opaque patch that hides the upper left part of the face and the eyes in the *Head Talking About Billy* work, the lower right part of the face seems to be covered with some dark blotches like a skin disease.[26] The title written to the right of the head—writing being a recurrent intermedial signature in Lynch's art works, as already noted—anchors the meaning that confers upon the black matter the forcefulness of angry words spurting from the mouth, besides indicating what the talk is about.

Like the mouth, faces are often ghost-like and roughly sketched in Lynch's paintings. Sometimes they have no eyes and sometimes strange, abjectal forms erupt from protruding eyes like, for example, in some of the *Distorted Nudes* photographs from 2004 and back to untitled graphite drawings on notebook paper from the mid-1960s of a one-eyed bald head from whose nose and mouth bursts a seemingly thick liquid. Obviously, these drawings are, as already said, inspired by Bacon's distorted figures, just like the powerful dark acrylic on canvas painting *Man Throwing Up* from 1968, which shows a small dark sculptured face that protrudes from a kind of yellow orifice (made of resin) placed in the middle of a black background. The face vomits a

splattering yellow liquid, which seems to run down the black surface.[27] Moreover, sculpted, distorted and somewhat creepy doll's faces protrude relief-like from many of the large canvases (for example, the large mixed-media painting with the oxymoron title *Bob Finds Himself in a World For Which He Has No Understanding* (2000)) displayed in *The Air is on Fire* exhibition. Or sculpted heads are attached to thin metal strings and made to float from the canvas (for example, in the more recent painting *The Thoughts of Mr. Bee-Man* (2018)).

In *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago*, the roughly made face contrasts starkly with the realistic use of materials for the man's body (real trousers and a real jacket, watch and cellphone), which provides the painting with the three-dimensional, relief-like surface characteristic of many of Lynch's other paintings. Blood and intestines burst from the man's chest towards and beyond his face. The man stands with his arms outstretched, as if he was being crucified or as an involuntary effect of the force of the attack on his body. His short, thick fingers point violently in all directions, and his lilac ghost-like shadow (reminiscent of other works of ghosts and shadows in Lynch like the watercolour drawings *My Shadow is a Monster* (2011), *My Shadow is with Me Always* (2008–09) and *With Myself* (no date), or the oil painting *Shadow of a Twisted Hand Across My House* (1988)) casts the figure of a man with severed arms—as if the shadow was pointing to the body as fundamentally an abject form.

The written caption in the upper right of *This Man Was Shot 0.9592 Seconds Ago* reads: "This man was shot 0.9502 seconds ago." In contrast to the text in the *Redman* painting, the caption is crucial to understand how this painting works to include the viewer as a participant. The temporal anchoring of the depicted incident positions the viewer as literally an *eyewitness* to a man being shot. The painting's violence, its carnal spectacularity and the written caption produce an impossible sense of the here and now, which lifts the painting from its medial belonging and transforms it into an intermedial hybrid in between painting, photography and the filmic freeze frame. The title claims that what we see is an incident captured in a fraction of a second by a measuring tool that is obviously capable of measuring time down to one ten thousandth of a second. However, the painting lacks photography's indexical "*having-been-there*'-ness (Barthes 1980). The

caption denies any past to the motif, which is forever frozen in a moment so close to now as to still be going on or forever becoming.

The painting can be regarded as the creation of an encounter with the shooting of a man. We witness the event, which occurred less than a second ago and is therefore in a sense unfinished. This man has been shot but he is also in the process of being shot. The frozen moment in the violent act of attacking and destroying a body captures the viewer in this very instant. The man's frontal position and the time warp into which the painting immerses the viewer not only position us as eyewitnesses but inevitably also make us accomplices to a crime. Indeed, the fact that this man was shot 0.9502 seconds ago makes it more than likely that the person who is standing in front of him is also the one who shot him—that is, the visitor/viewer himself or herself. The painting creates a violent encounter and, moreover, the time warp indicated by the caption suggests that the violent act is bound to repeat itself. Each time a new visitor/viewer approaches the painting, "this man was shot 0.9502 seconds ago". Again and again, each new viewer is constructed as a perpetrator, as if the caption creates a perpetual loop, into which viewers are immersed and through which they are transformed into active participants.

Even though this is a painting, it acts like more than a painting, as it were. In a sense, it blurs the boundaries between painting and installation. It forces the viewer or exhibition visitor into a position as a participant and in doing so creates a *shaped space* (Petersen 2015) in which painting and viewer enter into a dynamic exchange with a certain effect. Like Mactaggart (2010), Andrei Ujica and Boris Groys, in their conversation about Lynch in the *Air is on Fire* exhibition catalogue, reflect on how Lynch has added movement and sound to his paintings, "transposing the static time of visual art onto film and thereby inevitably setting it in motion" (2007: 379). However, my point here is that Lynch adds movement to this painting in a different way. Lynch not only transforms paintings into moving images with *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago*; he transforms a painting into another art form that comes into being through the contribution of the viewer.

Down the man's left trouser leg run two narrow orange-coloured slightly patterned streams. Maybe they are pieces of string or maybe they are lines of pus-infected blood from the wound—even though

blood would not run that far in the course of 0.9502 seconds! However, the lines resemble remarkably the line of blood running down performance artist Chris Burden's left arm after he had accidentally been hit by a bullet during his performance *Shoot* in 1971. The result is shown in a much-reproduced photo taken after the incident as a kind of proof that he had actually been shot in the arm. The rifle misfire by Burden's friend in the F Space Gallery, Santa Ana, CA (attended by just a handful of spectators, apparently Burden's friends (O'Dell 1998)), which was meant to just graze Burden's upper arm but ended up penetrating it, is preserved in a very short sound and video clip.[28] However, the shooting is documented and made famous as much by "the artist's decision to circulate the photograph of his bloodied arm, white tee shirt, and shocked eyes as it [is by] the audacity of the live event itself" (Phelan 2012: 19). The following laconic remark by the artist also became renowned: "At 7:45 p.m. I was shot in the left arm by a friend. The bullet was a copper jacket 22 long rifle. My friend was standing about fifteen feet from me" (cited in O'Dell 1998: 1)—which resembles the laconic tone in Lynch's painting.

In the photograph, the blood runs like a string of tightly knit pearls, some of which is reflected by the flashlight from the camera. It looks exactly like the yellow-reddish lines on the man's trousers in Lynch's mixed-media painting and connects—at least in my reading—the two art works about shooting and violence with 25 years in between. Burden's performance immediately "pushed the viewers' comfort level" (Phillips 2013: 18) and was, according to his many comments on the performance piece, an experiment, in which he wanted to experience for himself what it was like to know that the body was threatened by destruction just like it was continuously in Vietnam: "[H]e was curious to see what would happen if one staged not theatrical, fake violence, but an *actual* act of violence in the context of performance art" (Jones 2013: 123).

The small audience for the performance did not interfere or try to prevent the shooting. Whereas *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago* is pointing at the viewer and inserts the viewer as part of the work, *The Shoot* was about the artist and positioned the small audience as just passive bystanders. While *The Shoot* made it possible for the audience to interfere and might force them to reflect upon why they didn't, as it

were, *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago* constructs the audience in the opposite manner, albeit imaginatively: active, not passive, perpetrator, not bystander, participator, not viewer.

The Shoot was performed live by the artist and the shooter and was later archived through a short, eight-second video clip and an audio recording of the misfire, besides—not least—the circulated photographs of the wounded artist. The video and sound documentation preserved a Shoot(ing), a singular fleeting now. The photographs of the wounded artist preserved the more extended temporality of a man having been *shot*. The work is called *Shoot* . The title is a verb in the imperative, which signals and demands an—upcoming, not yet happening—now. The photographs documented the obedience to the demand and its result—Chris Burden having been shot. Hence, the media together blurred boundaries between genres and transformed the live performance into an intermedia event, you could say, not a fleeting, transient, unreproducible performance but a mediation of an act, in which Burden was both active and passive.

On the one hand, Burden's performances at the beginning of the 1990s were, as Amelia Jones put it, "the perpetration of sensationalistic acts" in which Burden used his own body as the object of violence (2013: 118). Yet, he was not blurring the boundaries between artwork and audiences in this provocative performance. A precondition for that to happen would be that the audience were supposed to interfere, trying to stop the shooting. However, they did not and were not. The audience was positioned as onlookers. By contrast, 25 years later, David Lynch used an "old-fashioned" medium, a large painting, and a written caption to involve the viewer in the work's coming into being. Paradoxically, the painting constituted the viewer as outside but also inside and transformed the painting into a virtual installation in the exhibition context.[29]

This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago is, in a sense, an impossible painting-turned-installation in and by the very encounter with the viewer/visitor. The viewer/visitor on his or her part turns into a participant by means of the caption's temporal inscription. The work resembles the installation experience with mixed-media works that do not fit into established media categories, art historian Anne Ring Petersen calls "[s]tanding while viewing" (2015: 257). In this context,

one is not surrounded by the work as is usual with installation art, and viewers "are not so much choreographed as they are positioned" in front of the work (op. cit.: 258). Nevertheless, she continues, in contrast to contemplating a painting, the viewing position is not self-evident and has to be decided upon by the viewer. In the case of *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago*, the painting only turns into a virtual installation in and by the encounter between work and viewer, through the temporal right now and the spatial closeness to the painting that this encounter creates. Clear boundaries between audience space and diegetic space dissolve. The viewer/visitor is (inter)actively immersed, even uncannily caught in a fraction of time without extension and a space with no clear demarcation. My point is that this "old" art form transgresses its own medial boundaries. *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago* is in itself able to convey the same feeling of being absorbed by the work as do Lynch's films and the very exhibition in which it is displayed.

In summary: *The Air is on Fire* can be understood as an *intermedia space* . Each work of art is put on display in accordance with the artist's and the curators' intentions and contributes to the creation of the exhibition's narrative in space. Simultaneously, the exhibited works and the sound-music-noise atmosphere in combination with the mumble from the audience are woven together in still new combinations dependent on which way one walks through the exhibition. Hence, the soundscape and the audience function as the glue that ties the different works together within the exhibition space at the Fondation Cartier. This is, as I see it, why the exhibition made such a powerful experience possible.

Besides the drawings and pastels, the mixed-media paintings, the photographs and the sculptures,[30] *The Air is on Fire* exhibited two installations—the cinema theatre and the sitting room. As I have shown above, a painting like *This Man Was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago* also invites a sense of being part of an installation's coming into being. Finally, the "wider cultural environment" (O'Sullivan 2017) of this intermedia space includes the Lynch signature on the facade, the intertextual web of references to his films, the soundscape and, moreover, the exhibition space's connection to the garden outside and to the cityscape, enfolded in the exhibition space by being reflected in the doublings of the transparent glass facades. All these elements contribute to the

construction of the exhibition's porous boundaries to the surroundings. Hence, *The Air is on Fire* accords with Nouvel's idea of the exhibition space as being open, including and bringing still new understandings of art to life: "[T]he definitions of art are changing continually: the space at Cartier is designed to be entirely flexible. For one exhibition it can be draped, for another open" (Nouvel in Morgan 1998: 151).

An Installational Exhibition

I borrow the notion of "porous boundaries" from Danish art historian Anders Troelsen (2005) who, in an article about exhibition analysis, ponders the unstable relationship between art works and their surroundings in contemporary culture. Troelsen asserts that "boundaries are not what they used to be" when it comes to defining the identity of art works in relation to their spatial surroundings. Accordingly, he argues that "contemporary exhibitions behave like works" (2005: 145—my translation) and he says about installations within the confines of the exhibition space:

> through the involvement of pictorial, sculptural, scenic, architectural and filmic elements, works like these often turn into small exhibitions in themselves. In contrast, many exhibitions almost provide the impression of being installations […] many exhibitions […] have in themselves taken the shape of art works and present themselves as one large work, above all a 'Gesamtkunstwerk' (2005: 143, my translation from Danish).

I argue that this characteristic applies well to *The Air is on Fire*, which is more than a presentation of David Lynch's works. It is in itself a Lynch work. It is not an exhibition of Lynch's works, but a total work of Lynch's works. Accordingly, I suggest that it would be more precise to call *The Air is on Fire* an *installational exhibition* or regard the exhibition as a *total installation*.

I am here tapping into Danish art historian Anne Ring Petersen's discussion on the borderlines between installation art and other art forms. She refers to mixed-media projects that are neither just installations nor just exhibitions but a kind of mixture, "the staging of

an exhibition as a total installation" expresses "the will to create effective staging [...] in order to make the visit to the exhibition an engulfing, dramatic experience" (Petersen 2015: 47). Petersen names as an example of what she calls "auteur curators/directors" Peter Greenaway's *Flying Over Water* exhibition (first in Barcelona in 1997 and then at Malmö Kunsthall in 2000). This characteristic applies to Lynch as well. Even though *The Air is on Fire* is not curated solely by Lynch, he contributed with the construction of the exhibition *mise en scène* and its atmosphere.

In her comprehensive work on installation art, Anne Ring Petersen argues that installation is a very broad term that covers a range of different art works, "as long as they include several separate components that are brought together and combined in order to create a three-dimensional environment that completely or partly surrounds the viewer" (ibid.: 45). Moreover, because of the richness of objects or parts in an average installation, the viewer's position is often that of moving around and in between the different parts. Hence, the movement in space unfolds in time and creates what Petersen has called *a situation*, a set of circumstances into which one is thrown; that is, a spatio-temporal walk around and interaction with different objects constitutes an installation.

This spatial structure is what distinguishes the installation from other art forms, Petersen claims. Accordingly, she continues, installation art should not be defined

> as a certain type of art-object. It should rather be defined as a conceptual and phenomenological project which concerns the *shaping and activation of the space* in a way that is intended to involve the surroundings and the audience more intensely than sculpture and painting (ibid.: 149).

Consequently, Petersen emphasizes that in order to understand what characterizes installation art, an understanding of the viewer as involved with his or her whole body and not just the perceiving eyes is necessary. Installations "place the focus on the sensory multidimensionality of the art experience" (ibid.: 157). The visitor is at once an active participant in the installation's coming into being and an

observer of the other participants' acting. Installation is "designing a space for an audience" (ibid.: 149) and having an audience manoeuvre their bodies across space in time.

Installation art positions the viewer in the art work, not at a distance from it. The installation "shapes and activates space" (ibid.) and, vice versa, the installation is constructed by the audience inhabiting the afforded space. Hence, to Petersen, "installation differs from sculpture in that it is not about designing an object but, like architecture, designing a space, and, as with theatre, staging that space for an audience" (ibid.). Space is not coming into being and unfolding if not by the active—staged—participation of viewers.

In continuation of the above and borrowing a term from Petersen, my point is that *The Air is on Fire* can best be characterized as an installational exhibition. It is a spatial work of art, the mise en scène and objects of which are designed by Lynch. *The Air is on Fire* is *a designed environment*, an installation at the centre of which are two actual installations—the strange sitting room and the small cinema theatre. Paintings and other works activate the viewers and create a sense of installation within the installational exhibition, which for its part is held together as a rich environment by means of the music, the noise and the sound floating in the air and the viewers' interaction with space and objects. The works are of course crucial to the installational exhibition, but they acquire specific meanings related to this particular context. Regarded from the point of view of an installational exhibition, the works are released from their character as finished and closed works. They change when they are moved to a different environment, which fits in well with an understanding of Lynch's works as unfinished or continuously being reworked (which he subscribes to himself and to which I shall return in Chap. 5).

As an intermedial art form, Anne Ring Petersen understands the installation as closely connected with theatre and the stage. Her emphasis lies on installations as anything but autonomous objects. Rather, they are "stages, spatial structures laid out around viewers, for their benefit": "When viewers enter an installation, they enter the 'scene' of the art work, so to speak" (ibid.: 15). This idea of the stage is well matched with the ubiquity of stage references in *The Air is on Fire* and with the sense of walking around in a set design on a stage. Again,

there are all the “real” and drawn/painted/formed theatre curtains that provide a somewhat confusing bodily feeling of being onstage and backstage at one and the same time.

Stages and curtains are everywhere in Lynch’s productions, e.g. in cinema houses (*Inland Empire*), on sets (*Inland Empire* , *Mulholland Drive*), in music clubs (*Blue Velvet* , *Twin Peaks*, *Twin Peaks: The Return*, *Lost Highway* , *Mulholland Drive*), in the freak show and the royal theatre, even at the medical auditorium (*The Elephant Man*), or as an imaginary space (in *Eraserhead*)—not to forget the filmed stage production *Industrial Symphony No. 1* . Richard Martin has called the Red Room in *Twin Peaks* for “Lynch’s ultimate curtained arena” (2014: 143), this labyrinthine non-place, whose walls are made up of red curtains, which seem to divide different corridors and alike chambers or confusingly obscure the fact that the Red Room consists of sections that are in themselves moveable or turn upon themselves in an endless loop. Just like Chion (2006) remarked about Lynch’s set aesthetic and stage designs that spectators at one point necessarily turn into participants, Martin argues that the stage is dynamic and moveable in Lynch’s *oeuvre*: “The dynamics of the Lynchian stage ensure we are implicated in the performance, its boundaries extending beyond the screen to encompass the auditorium around us” (2014: 149). This description could include *The Air is on Fire* as well. Even though the curtains in the paintings allude to a specific space, the theatre or the cinema house, any space can ultimately turn into a stage in Lynch, voluntarily or involuntarily—like the radiator or the small cupboard in Henry’s room in *Eraserhead* , when Betty auditions for her part in *Mulholland Drive* , when Dorothy’s apartment turns into a stage for Jeffrey to behold and when Ben mimes to Roy Orbison’s “In Dreams” in *Blue Velvet* , when the bonnet of a car turns into a floor for Sailor’s performance for Lula by the end of *Wild at Heart*, or when Jimmy Scott is bathed in a theatre spotlight for his performance of Badalamenti and Lynch’s “Sycamore Trees” in the Red Room in the final episode of *Twin Peaks*.

The stage—real, imaginary or for the occasion—is a magical and spellbinding space in Lynch. However, it is also a space of cruelty, as in *The Elephant Man* , when Dr Treves puts John Merrick on display for his colleagues and later problematizes the objectivity of the medical gaze.

The *Eraserhead* baby on display on a stage is also, just like a freak in Bytes's freak show, defencelessly exposed to a scrutinizing gaze—the point being, though, that the curtained image and the stage aesthetic construct an uncomfortable position for the viewer, which may also occasion reflection.

Atmospheres and Lynchian Atmospheres

The stage aesthetic and theatrical performances that create their own spaces of affect are essential to Lynch's thinking by way of fragments and ideas, to which I return in Chap. 6. However, I suggest that the installation exhibition *The Air is on Fire* forms the ultimate curtained Lynch arena. It dissolves boundaries between work and surroundings and between visitor and participant and creates what German philosopher Gernot Böhme would call a *felt space* (2017, 2018 [2013]), an atmosphere in which we feel ourselves to be present.[31] It invites visitors to enter the different staged spaces and go on the stage themselves, to contemplate the other visitors as performers and be seen by them as part of the spatial performance. Moreover, these performances have no unilinear narrative and do not finish but change continuously within the confines of the overall exhibition space. Hence, *The Air is on Fire* consists of works that in different ways allude, or are displayed to allude, to the theatrical stage and in different ways involve the viewing body as imagined participant.

Anne Ring Petersen names three defining features of installation art: it activates space and context; it unfolds in time—"whereby its character becomes that of situation and process"; and finally, it involves the viewing body and attends to "bodily and subjective experience" (Petersen 2015: 41). This applies precisely to *The Air is on Fire* as an installational *exhibition*. *The Air is on Fire* moves conceptually towards the installation because of its *felt space* , its *atmosphere*.[32] In the following section, I will expand on the term "atmosphere" as it has primarily been understood within phenomenology as a diffuse yet felt space in between subject and object and I will apply it to *The Air is on Fire* and to two examples from Lynch films.

If an exhibition is usually defined by being "concerned with objects and their arrangement" (Urbach 2010: 12), the exhibition space itself is

subordinate to the display of objects and their conversation with each other. This is the ideal of the white cube, in which spatial atmosphere is reduced to a minimum. However, as architecture and design curator Henry Urbach argues in his short and elegant article "Exhibition as atmosphere" from 2010, if one takes an architectural point of departure, the task of the curator is not least to produce space and atmosphere, not only relations between objects but between objects and atmospheres. Taking atmosphere into consideration when considering the installational exhibition equally loosens the grip on the displayed object as a singular work and focuses interest on the object as a thing that communicates with and co-creates the entire environment.

The way Urbach describes what he calls "atmospheric exhibitions" recalls Petersen's conceptualization of the installational exhibition. However, what is important to Urbach's discussion is his emphasis on atmosphere. *Atmosphere* is "something to be felt and inhabited, not only to be seen", he contends (2010: 14). In Urbach's understanding, atmosphere is an affective binder. An atmosphere is transparent and invisible, but also material because it is made up of everything in the exhibition space:

> The atmosphere of an exhibition includes works of art, sure; we can even admit they are the main event. But it really does include everything else, and is not limited to these: architecture of the gallery; lighting and decor; furniture; interpretive elements; the activity and comportment of people, including security guards and other visitors; the ideas and affects that fill the air; the museological, curatorial, and artistic practices that discursively support the objects; the interpretive practices that support the activity of the viewers, and so forth. Smells and sounds, too" (Urbach 2010: 14).

To Urbach, exhibitional atmosphere consists of, and is created by, the entire intermedial and intercommunicative environment: exhibited objects, space, people and the sounds of people, other sounds and objects and what takes place in any single now in the interchanges between art works and everything else. Furthermore, according to

Urbach, atmosphere creates a sense of being addressed not as an individual viewer but as a collectivity.

Everything Urbach mentions contributes to the creation of the *The Air is on Fire* exhibition as a total installation. Atmosphere was that indispensable spatial dimension through which Lynch's world came into being and made itself felt. The particular Lynch atmosphere in *The Air is on Fire* was not least produced through the soundscape, which created a sense of being immersed in a multidirectional space, in which the works on display occupied but one element and, moreover, in which the boundaries between singular works were blurred.

Instead of atmosphere, Anne Ring Petersen uses the term "ambience" ("spatial ambiance"), which she defines as a "mode of experiencing art", "an attention to surroundings as a field of perception" (Petersen 2015: 42). None the less, her definition of ambience applies to atmosphere as well. What distinguishes Petersen's use of ambiance from most discussions on atmosphere is the latter's connection with affect. I understand atmosphere as certain intensities that unfold in space and are therefore located within spatial confines, as theorized most substantially by Gernot Böhme, or *a textured space in between* to elaborate on the title to Bille, Bjerregaard and Sørensen's (2014) Böhme-inspired introduction to a special issue about "Staged Atmospheres".

Studies of atmosphere are transdisciplinary. Besides, of course, meteorology, the field encompasses urban studies, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, marketing studies, learning environments, law and the arts (architecture, museology, musicology, literature, art studies) (see Griffero and Tedeschini 2019; Griffero 2019). For my purpose in this chapter of conceptualizing the spatial character of atmosphere in an intermedia context, I start from Böhme, who for his part takes his point of departure and the concept from German phenomenologist Hermann Schmitz's work on atmospheres (for example, Schmitz 2014). Böhme quotes Schmitz in saying that atmospheres are "without borders, disseminated and yet without place, that is, not localizable" (Böhme 2017: 16). Böhme continues: "They are affective powers of feeling, spatial bearers of moods" (ibid.). Böhme also refers to Schmitz for discussing emotions as atmospheres and

what Schmitz calls “area-less spaces”: “The space of the felt body and the space of emotions as atmospheres” (Schmitz 2016: 3).

Both Böhme and Schmitz are interested in understanding atmospheres as spatial phenomena. However, Böhme, more than Schmitz, is preoccupied with atmosphere as an aesthetic concept. He criticizes Schmitz for thinking of atmospheres as merely free-floating intensities in themselves, detached from things and people, instead of understanding them as produced by people and things in not easily described ways. Accordingly, he calls Schmitz’s approach “[a] quasi-aesthetics of reception” (Böhme 2017: 18; similarly in 2018 [2013]: 21) in contrast to his own Benjamin-inspired take on atmospheres (Böhme understands *aura* as a form of atmosphere), which he calls an “aesthetics of production” (2016: 2) and which includes relations between objects, perception in space and people (what Professor of architecture Mark Dorrian, in his Benjamin-inspired discussion on atmosphere, calls “the multimodality of sensory experience” (2014: 188)).

Böhme understands atmospheres as sensory spaces in between things and people. They are fluid and “indeterminate, above all as regards their ontological status. We are not sure whether we should attribute them to the objects or environments from which they proceed or to the subjects who experience them” (Böhme 2017: 11–12). Atmosphere is a fluid concept that points at something that is also fluid and invisible, at once tangible and indistinct: as Mark Dorrian puts it, atmospheres are “somehow ‘in the air’, above and beyond objects, and spatially indeterminate” (2014: 191). However, no matter how fluid, atmospheres have to do with spaces, things and people. Atmospheres come into existence in between objects and people and are neither subjective nor objective. Atmosphere has to do with space (hence Böhme’s (2018 [2013]) interest in architecture and the stage set), temporality (atmospheres are always situated in time) and immersion. An atmosphere “encloses” or “envelops” the viewer/visitor, two of the recurrent terms in Böhme’s writing through which he describes bodily situatedness in space (Böhme 2018 [2013]; see also Bille, Bjerregaard and Sørensen 2014, Anderson 2009, 2014).

Herman Schmitz conceptualizes affective atmospheres as abstract emotions that are unintentionally related to bodies in space (what

Italian philosopher Tonino Griffero (2019: 29) calls Schmitz's "radical anti-intentionalist perspective"). Schmitz says: "In my opinion, emotions are atmospheres poured out spatially that move the felt (not the material) body" (Schmitz 2011: 247; see also Schmitz 2016). By contrast, Böhme is interested in atmosphere as part of the conceptualization of art, of the blurred boundaries between objects, people and spaces, and how atmospheres are produced in particular environments. To both Böhme and Schmitz atmosphere is essential to a "phenomenology of spatiality" (Schmitz 2016: 6) and they both understand atmospheres as emotions, being hit by emotions ("die affektives Betroffensein von Gefühlen" (Schmitz 2014: 32). However, to Böhme, atmosphere is perceived as the emotional response to, and the co-creation of, a spatial dynamics, made by people and the "tuning" of things. Böhme thus claims that "Schmitz credits atmospheres with too great an independence from things" (2017: 17). Böhme uses the term "ecstasies" for the qualities through which things "articulate their presence" (ibid.: 19), that which can be brought to live in things in a (social) context. Ecstasy is the way "in which an object comes out of its shell, as it were, and transforms the sphere of its presence" (ibid.: 168). Ecstasy is a kind of ontology of things—the way they always reach out to the world and diffuse in the world. Thus, Böhme's aesthetics is a radical context aesthetics. His key interest is art works' situatedness in spaces with particular respect to the way in which they "alter spaces by their presence" (ibid.: 26). Böhme scrutinizes how the conditions can be produced—staged—for an atmosphere to appear. Again, by his focus on atmosphere as production, Böhme differs from Schmitz.

To Böhme, the term "atmosphere" is a concept that offers a new take on the aesthetics of art. Atmosphere loosens the understanding of art works from the work itself and focuses instead on the space between the viewer and the work: "a floating in between, something between things and the perceiving subjects" (ibid.: 30).[33] Atmospheres are experienced as an emotional effect, Böhme claims. Hence, he contends that a focus on atmosphere in understanding the perception of art is oppositional to the "old aesthetics", which he calls a "judgmental aesthetics" (ibid.: 12). The object is usually conceived in terms of its finiteness and boundedness ("closure" (ibid.: 18)), whereas "the aesthetics of atmosphere shifts attention away from the 'what'

something represents to the 'how' something is present" (ibid.: 26, see also Bille, Bjerregaard and Sørensen 2015; Bjerregaard 2015; Anderson 2009). To analyse atmosphere is therefore to focus on space and the spatial embedding of a work. Moreover, an aesthetics of atmosphere is an aesthetics of presence.

Atmosphere is more than the sum of the objects on display in an exhibition. It "creates a space of intensity that overflows a represented world organized into subjects and objects or subjects and other subjects" (Anderson 2009: 79; 2016: 174). Böhme's theory of atmospheres has been connected to affect theory (Bille 2018; Bille, Bjerregaard and Sørensen 2015; Bjerregaard 2015; Anderson 2009, 2016); thus Böhme contends that "atmospheres are experienced in terms of the affects they arouse" in specific situations (Böhme 2017: 183). Böhme does not subscribe to Schmitz's understanding of atmospheres as free-floating and indeterminate, as already mentioned; Schmitz writes: "Feelings are spatial, but have no locus; they are poured-forth atmospheres" (as quoted in Rauh 2017). However, despite their differences regarding how atmospheres are produced and Böhme's focus on aesthetics notwithstanding, both Schmitz and Böhme understand atmospheres as intensities related to spaces and people (or what Brian Massumi (2002) would call bodies). To both Schmitz and Böhme atmosphere is an intensity which is in excess of bodies but is also constructed by bodies (and things/art works according to Böhme). In that respect, the two philosophers' understanding of atmospheres or what geographer Ben Andersson in his important work (2016) on affect would call "affective atmospheres" resemble Massumi's understanding of affect as "autonomous to the degree to which it escapes confinement in the particular body whose vitality, or potential for interaction, it is" (Massumi 2002: 35). To Böhme as well as to Anderson atmosphere is not the sum of but exceeds the collective; (affective) atmospheres are "quasive-objective feelings that are indeterminately diffused in space" (Böhme 2018 [2013]: 125).

Bille stresses that Böhme's thinking regarding atmospheres has sustained in important ways the understanding of "affective and emotional aspects of human lives as they unfold through space" (Bille 2018: 1). What is important to Böhme is the materiality embedded in atmospheres, what emanates from things and opens up things to the

surroundings. Hence, the production of atmospheric intensity connects with Böhme's important conceptualization of objects/things as indeterminate, as "ways in which a thing goes out of itself and modifies the sphere of its presence" (2017: 184). Simultaneously, people step out of themselves in order to co-produce atmospheres. Accordingly, to Böhme, atmospheres are ecstasies produced in the interaction between things (like art works) and people that are both materialities lending their subjectivities and their objectivities to the spatial environment. Therefore, his term "ecstasies of things" emphasizes the ability of things to actively create an environment and contribute to what could also be called affective energy.

Böhme's thinking is useful for understanding how an exhibition creates atmosphere. However, he also uses the term to point at a general aestheticization of cultural life and how atmosphere is crucial to the working and communication of interior design, advertisement, cosmetics and architecture.[34] In Böhme's writing, atmosphere encompasses a general theory of aesthetic perception that he understands as "basically the manner in which one is bodily present for something or someone or one's bodily state in an environment" (2018 [2013]: 23). The term, therefore, is one way in which to conceptualize contemporary society as ubiquitously designed environments for the performances of social life: "In general, it can be said that atmospheres are involved wherever something is being staged, wherever design is a factor—and that now means: almost everywhere" (ibid.: 29). Indeed, the stage set mirrors the general theatricalization of our life, he says.

A key example of a scene in Böhme's aesthetics of atmosphere is the stage set, to which he dedicates one chapter in *The Aesthetics of Atmosphere* (2017, see also Böhme 2018 [2013]). To Böhme, the stage setting is the paradigmatic example of design as atmosphere, because the things on the stage in most cases are not important in themselves but for the impression the totality of the scenic arrangement conveys in connection with lighting (which creates space), music (regarded by Böhme as "the fundamental atmospheric art form" that "shapes the way the listener finds him- or herself in space" (Böhme 2017: 170 and 171)) and sound design (which creates acoustic atmospheres) (Böhme 2018 [2013]: 131–134). Hence, Böhme contends that it was not before electricity made it possible to use sound and light to create a unified

space on stage that the stage became a space into which one could become immersed as an audience.

One more thinker should be mentioned before I turn to Lynch and atmosphere, namely French phenomenologist Mikel Dufrenne, who has written extensively about the relationship between phenomenology and art, including on atmosphere. In his overview of the field, Griffero (2019: 23) calls Dufrenne a "minor author". However, Ben Anderson (2009, 2016, Chap. 7) makes an illuminating comparison between Böhme's and Dufrenne's thinking about atmosphere in his major work *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* (1973 [1953])—which Böhme, by the way, does not refer to. In a certain sense, Anderson's short summary and his call for understanding atmosphere as quasi-autonomous, exceeding the thing or object from which they emerge, is more interesting than reading Dufrenne himself. As Anderson notes, Dufrenne does not offer a precise definition of atmosphere. However, the point running through Dufrenne's description is that atmospheres are unsteady and dynamic spaces of feeling created by aesthetic objects. Dufrenne suggests the term "atmosphere" for the way an aesthetic object, or what he calls the "expressed world" of an aesthetic object (in contrast to the represented world) confers upon the represented a sense of "inexhaustibility" (1973 [1953]: 188) that makes the object transcend itself and diffuse into the surroundings as atmosphere or affective atmospheres (much like Böhme's ecstasies). The world of the aesthetic object is what distinguishes it from everyday objects, or, as Dufrenne contends, this world:

> is less a world than the atmosphere of a world [...] Thus it is a matter of a certain quality of object or of beings, but a quality which does not belong to them in their own right, since it is not they that bring it about. The quality in question is like a supervening or impersonal principle in accordance with which we say that there is an electric atmosphere or, as Trénet sang, that there is joy in the air. This principle is embodied in individuals or in things. It is somewhat like the collective consciousness which governs individual consciousness in times of agitation (ibid.: 168).

This quotation from Dufrenne's almost 600-page-long book points at the indeterminable in atmospheres. As a "certain quality", atmospheres exist in between people and things and arise involuntarily, according to Dufrenne, similarly to what Schmitz thinks but in contrast to Böhme to whom atmospheres can be staged. What is also interesting in the quote is Dufrenne's reference to "the collective consciousness" of which the "individual consciousness" partakes. Even though Dufrenne is not at all interested in the aesthetic object in its social context, he suggests (like Urbach) that an atmosphere can be a shared collective phenomenon, similar to what Böhme calls an "interpersonal atmosphere" (Böhme 2018 [2013]: 98), which a collective agrees upon, co-produces and shares.[35]

In summary, what is characteristic of atmosphere in the exhibition context is that it can be felt as a certain intensity or affective disposition which emanates from a space. Atmosphere is an intermedial phenomenon, but atmospheres can also be staged. Atmosphere refers to the presence of felt bodies in space and to the indeterminate and ineffable something in between subjects and objects. Moreover, atmospheres are ever changing, depending upon the choreographed movements of bodies in spaces. Spatial atmospheres as sensed by the subject may be delimited (by architectural confines or other spatial designs) or without borders, or atmosphere may be a sensorium in a more abstract manner as Schmitz would have it (music and noise may contribute to this). Hence, atmospheres may be indeterminate affective constellations, or they may be produced, "generated deliberately by specific, indeed material constellations" (Böhme 2018 [2013]: 119). Böhme thinks, for example, of strategic communication or stage design, where what he calls a "climate" can be produced by arranging "things, spatial constellations, light and sound in specific ways" (ibid.)—fictional, staged spaces are, evidently, another example of the same. Atmospheres contribute an argument about the unboundedness of a work in a particular context, be it an art object or a film. From the point of view of atmosphere, the (art) work is ontologically defined by its communicativeness and extension beyond itself into space. This is the quality Böhme calls the *ecstasy* of the work. Ecstasy constructs the viewing body as a sensing body, which for its part transmits affective impulses to other bodies and to the surrounding space. As Böhme puts

it, “atmospheres are experienced in a state of affective resonance” (Böhme 2017: 168).

Art installations are arenas for the unfolding of atmospheres. The same goes for the installational subgenre (Petersen 2016) installational exhibition, which I have argued *The Air is on Fire* belongs to. The displayed works, decor, lighting and sound everywhere in the rooms at the Fondation Cartier together constitute a felt space that the visitors co-create. The viewers/visitors/participants are invited to contribute to the transformation of the paintings into small installational spaces by pushing a button and co-constructing entire rooms as installational environments. Considering Lynch’s initial dream of “moving paintings” that “made sounds”, and the continuous intermedial encounters between the different kinds of media he works with, it makes perfect sense that he has done so many solo exhibitions.

Lynch has on numerous occasions repeated how he became interested in film in his art school days in Philadelphia in the mid-1960s: While he was painting, he said—and I quote him again, slightly differently: “I’m looking at the painting and *from* the painting came a wind … And the green garden plants began to move … And I’m at this and hearing this and I say, ‘Oh, a moving painting’. And that was it” (cited from Cozzolino 2014: 13; see also Lynch 2006: 13, and Chion 2006: 9–10). In the same vein, he talked about missing sound and being able to create an environment: “I missed the sound. I was expecting a sound, or maybe the wind to come out. I also wanted the edges to disappear. I wanted to get into the inside. It was spatial” (quoted in Chion 2006: ibid., and Nieland 2012: 114). Chion furthermore argues that “with sound in Lynch’s work, we are constantly *within* something” (Chion 2006: 42—my emphasis). Sound inhabits an “interiorizing force”, as Nieland phrases it (Nieland 2012: 114). Sound contributes to the construction of a feeling of being immersed, to be drawn into a sonic space, or a world, to repeat one of Lynch’s favourite words for an imagined space.[36]

Nieland calls Lynch a “sculptor of sound” (2012: 55). Hereby he refers to the careful designing of sound everywhere in Lynch’s works, but also to the materiality, the *felt* atmosphere created by his sounds. However, sound is but one of the ways Lynch reaches out to the audience and creates bodily feelings of being immersed in a space. The

intermedial installational space seems to be an ideal way for Lynch to create an immersive environment. The installational exhibition immerses the visitor literally, and *The Air is on Fire* does this on a grand scale. The installational exhibition is in a constant process of becoming: the meeting between an artist's works and the visitors in a shared space. The co-presence of being "bound up in shared situations" (Bille 2019: 248), of being present in this staged Lynchian world, creates a collective atmosphere, to return to Urbach and Dufrenne.

The title of the exhibition, *The Air is on Fire*, does not embrace the entirety of the displayed works particularly well, in my view, even though there is fire in some of the works, and even though there is a lot of air making itself felt as energy in the dark paintings (Nochimson 1996). The title functions like one of the sentences (or titles) glued to a painting with cut-out letters, which adds texture to the works and emphasizes an atmosphere more than it anchors a theme or a meaning. On the other hand, fire is a recognizable and ubiquitous Lynch element, and it is, of course, often tied to air. However, as I see it, the title points to the exhibition as atmosphere (air) and to a particular affective quality of atmospheres (fire). It points to an atmospheric layering that is not attributed to any particular object or work but to the entire affective environment, a mobile and dynamic intensity produced across space as the viewers traverse space.

The Lynchian exhibition space is a space of immersion. Its atmosphere is (co-)designed by Lynch and contextualized by the auteur's film works, which makes the atmosphere even more prominent. Paintings, drawings, sounds, noises , photographs, etc. are staged in the Fondation Cartier's exhibition space in such a way as to be generators of atmospheres, as Böhme would have it. The objects break down individual confines and reach out into the exhibition space. They communicate with each other and with the visitors and make them talk back—in addition to drawing attention to themselves as works. Adding to this creation of atmosphere is the fact that the exhibited works are not ordered chronologically and *The Air is on Fire* does not have the explanatory text one usually finds at exhibitions—except for a short introduction by the entrance. The exhibition's mise en scène does not prescribe a path to follow.[37] It does not purport to show the chronological development of an artist's works but rather to create a

spatial atmosphere of Lynchian intensity for the visitors to wander and feel on their bodies.

Atmospheric Film Spaces in Lynch

Atmosphere is also a prominent aesthetic characteristic outside of the space of the exhibition in Lynch's world. The bodily experience of being immersed and enveloped can be felt everywhere in his works and Böhme's understanding of staged atmospheres opens up to analysis of ways in which atmospheres are created in his films, too. Atmospheres abound in Lynch's filmic spaces, and at times an overwhelming sense of space as pure atmosphere seems to take over. A felt atmosphere can be created through an excess of style. I propose that atmosphere can be staged in two ways in the films, one through editing and the other through mise en scène. Therefore, atmosphere often subjugates and delays the progression of the narrative, even makes it obsolete—to the extent that it is at all meaningful to talk about the unfolding of a narrative in Lynch.

The subordination of style to plot is key to Bordwell and Thompson's (2013 [1979]) description of the working of classical Hollywood cinema. The opposite is the case in Lynch. I will illustrate the creation of atmosphere in Lynch's films through editing with the middle part of the famous opening sequence in *Blue Velvet* , in which Jeffrey's father is watering his lawn but ends up lying on the ground after having suffered a stroke. The very short montage from when we see him for the first time after an establishing shot of the suburban house until he lies rattling on the lawn consists of 14 shots (interspersed with another two shots from the inside of the house). It starts with a long shot of the house and then cuts to a long shot of the father watering in the garden. After two shots of the mother watching a crime programme on TV, there is a medium shot of the father quietly watering and then a medium shot of the tap and hose with a dark sound of the water hissing. This is the first diegetic sound in the sequence, which we hear on top of the *Blue Velvet* tune playing under the whole opening sequence. Then the father tugs at the hose and there is a cut to a close-up of the hose coiled around a branch, with the sound of the leaves moving to the pull. The next shot shows the father once more in

a medium shot and the following shot is a close-up of the tap and hose, the water hissing even more frenetically. The next shot repeats the image of the coiled hose and then once more the tap and hose, the water hissing increasingly. Then the hose seems to get free of the branch, and simultaneously the father clasps his neck and collapses. In the next shot we see him from above, rattling on the ground, the hose in his hand and the water pouring from it. The following shot is a blurred close-up of water drops and the final one is of the father lying down, a barking dog drinking from the jet of water coming out of the hose in his hand and a toddler walking towards the lying man whose chest is moving heavily up and down.[38]

Read in the way of classical narrative, the montage would offer a linear and ascending curve of tension towards the catastrophe as indicated by the close-ups: the metal joining between the hose and the tap breaking loose and hitting the father violently in the neck. This combination of cause and effect is cued by the water at the joining hissing increasingly, the pressure increased by the hose's wrapping around the branch, the length of cuts getting shorter and shorter and the diegetic sound becoming more intense. This reading implies that every shot is there for a narrative reason, which is at once anticipating and explaining the father's fall. However, as the water is still running through the hose, there has been no rupture caused by the water pressure. Therefore, the reading by causality deployed to classical narrative, which the editing invites, must be revised. The close-ups of condensed water pressure bear no meaning outside of themselves. They are neither pointing at temporality nor causality. They are not bits of information helping a narrative along but are instead carriers of an atmosphere of tension—which in this case clashes with Roy Orbison's soft-voiced rendition of "Blue Velvet".

An example of the creation of atmosphere through mise en scène comes from Fred and Renee's house in *Lost Highway* . We know from Lynch's paintings of matchstick houses that the home is not a safe environment. "Something is always askew in Lynch's houses," says Martin (2014: 66). It is unfriendly and unfamiliar, "a place where things can go wrong" (Lynch in McKenna 1992: 24, and in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 10). The atmosphere of disorder and dissolution in the Madison house is established by blurring perception in different ways:

dissolving the perception of space and particularly dissolving firm spatial demarcations between the figures (Fred and Renee) and their environment (the house), which is dark and cavernous—like the sitting room in the exhibition.[39]

In the scene after the failed intercourse (ending with the cruel close-up of Renee's hand tapping Fred condescendingly), Fred says to Renee, "I had a dream last night", and after his remark, we hear his off-screen voice apparently recounting the dream as he slides into the frame from the right. His black tee shirt merges with the black background of the room and his bodily contours dissolve.[40] Silently he slides around the house looking observantly for Renee, whom he can hear calling out his name from a distance, sounding like she was far away—or she was calling him from another world. Then there is a conspicuous cut to a medium close-up of the roaring fire in the fireplace. After the distant sound of Renee's calling, Fred's somewhat hoarse and breathless off-screen recounting of what he had dreamt and an underlying non-diegetic tremble of a deep sound, the high and clear on-screen sound of the roaring fire is what sets this shot apart from the surrounding shots and constructs it as singular *atmospheric excess*. There is no diegetic reason for the change of sound volume or camera distance. The shot detaches itself from the surrounding shots as a *fire fragment*, a condensed representation of the affective atmosphere that is felt everywhere in the house and which creates an uncanny sense of a coming explosion.

The scene gives the impression that it illustrates Fred's recounting of a dream, complete with an eruption of white smoke from a corner as Fred passes the fireplace. However, other scenes from the house also show the dark corridor as a kind of materiality that is able to engulf Fred and then regurgitate him again from the dark matter.

Lynch has said about his dark paintings that:

> [b]lack has depth. It's like a little egress; you can go into it, and because it keeps continuing to be dark, the mind kicks in, and a lot of things that are going on in there become manifest (in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 20).

This description accords well with the darkness in the Madison house. As much as the darkness condenses Fred's rage and his unfulfilled desire towards Renee, it creates a spatially fluid and affectively indeterminate atmosphere. There is infinite darkness in the corridors, which gives the impression of a black environment without oxygen and without confines, in which one can get lost, collapse or disintegrate—like Fred does in the dream scene, when the camera follows him towards the bedroom. However, rather than taking Fred's point of view, the camera moves uncontrollably at its own pace and glides along the red velvet curtain in the bedroom towards Renee on her side of the bed under the black sheets before Fred arrives in the room.

Throughout the scenes in the house, both Fred and Renee are sliding, ghost-like. As if they are floating a few centimetres above the floor, they turn around corners without making a sound. They may—seemingly accidentally—meet in the living room, gliding in there each from their own side. Nevertheless, no matter how close they are, they appear to be in different spaces and times, or talking to each other as if a transparent veil is dividing them.

In the scene in the Madison house after Fred has met Mystery Man at Andy's party, the darkness is even denser, and all-encompassing. We see Renee in the bathroom and then Fred, who walks slowly across the bedroom towards a dark corridor. After another cut to Renee in the bathroom, Fred moves away from the camera, into the darkness, and disappears completely. Because of his black short-sleeved tee shirt, his neck and underarms are the last visible traces of his body. As it disappears, the frame is black apart from some slightly lighter parts to the right and left.[41] In the bathroom, Renee lifts her head as if she hears a noise, and then there is a cut to a strange medium shot of Fred "within the tomb-like confines of a small room" (Pizzello 2009: 176), wherever in the house that might be. Fred is staring, scowling, a bit to the left, his face lit in a slightly greenish way. Then he moves a bit forward and as the "real" Fred at the same time enters the frame in the right foreground, we understand that we have been looking at Fred's reflection in a mirror. Apart from the point that this disturbing image doubling foreshadows the later Fred/Pete doubling, the slight displacement adds to the feeling of an uncanny architecture and a disorienting unhomely atmosphere. Fred slides in and out of darkness,

on the verge of being dematerialized and then return from the dark density as if the house was inhabited by a dark force to which he had to surrender.[42]

The tactile and impenetrable blackness, which seems like living matter capable of swallowing and regurgitating whatever walks into it, the slow-paced dialogue that seems theatrical, the couple's voices that at times seem remote and disembodied, and which confer upon the talk a sense of doubling, the ubiquitous eerie background noise—these elements of mise en scène contribute to the feeling of an atmospheric tension in the house, as if the house was a black hole of dark, destructive energy, which maybe ends with Fred's murdering of Renee. Hence, lighting, the ubiquitous drone-like sound, the staging and colouring of the house's geography, and Fred and Renee's sliding bodies work together to create a free-floating atmosphere of subdued affect that always seems on the verge of implosion.

A Contemporary Total Media Work

Lynch has often complained about the way artists are categorized rigidly as either one thing, for example a film-maker, or another, such as a painter:

> *The Air is on Fire* was the first time I was able to see a lot of my work together, and that was a beautiful thing. It's always been the case that if you do one thing you're not supposed to do other things—like, if you're known as a film-maker and you also paint, then your painting is seen as a kind of hobby, like golfing. You're a celebrity painter and that's just the way it was. But around the time I had that exhibition the world started changing, and now people can do anything (Lynch in Lynch and McKenna 2018: 461).

McKenna (2018) points out that this complaint about the (art) world's view of the artist as a genius within one discipline was expressed as early as in Chris Rodley's interview book (2005 [1997]). Asked by Rodley whether his reputation as a film-maker puts pressure on his work as a painter and photographer, Lynch answers:

> It does. And even worse than that is the 'Celebrity Painting' thing. It really makes you puke. And it's a terrible thing (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 28–29).

David Lynch *is* a celebrity, someone whom people gather around in crowds to look at in person. Moreover, he has over the years constructed a particular "artist's persona" (Marshall, Moore and Barbour 2019), which consists of a well-known, trendy appearance (buttoned white or black shirt, black jacket (or no jacket) and a fashionable haircut (short on the sides and longer and either bristled or, more recently, swept back at the front and on top of the head). Moreover, he has a well-known way of explaining—or rather not explaining—his works by repeating the same words and lines about "ideas", "abstractions" and "going into worlds". He has a significant way of moving his fingers rapidly in interviews, and in recent years (as well as in *Catching the Big Fish* (2006)) he has preferred to talk about his long-time practising of transcendental meditation.

David Lynch has refrained throughout his career from adding particular meanings to his work, either biographical or political. He has on numerous occasions opposed attempts by interviewers and fans to find patterns and coherences—what Lindsay Hallam (2018: 114) calls his "trademark elusiveness". Many studies of David Lynch's works at one point refer to his upbringing, and in interviews he refers recurrently to moving around a lot to different small towns in the north-western parts of the US with his family, most clearly elaborated, of course, in the combined autobiography/biography *Room to Dream* (Lynch and McKenna 2018). However, Lynch has just as recurrently denied that his works carry autobiographical meaning. This may explain the lack of art historical framing and chronology in *The Air is on Fire*. In the interview in the catalogue to the exhibition, McKenna (2007) asks him whether he thinks this particular time in his life is of importance, to which he answers no. McKenna continues: "So you don't think any of these drawings [which are going to be displayed in *The Air is on Fire*] particularly reflect what you were going through at that time and place." To which Lynch replies: "They have in some way but I don't know how" (McKenna 2007: 22).

As for political meanings, Lynch rejects "message films". Asked by *Guardian* cultural journalist Killian Fox whether he sees his work as contributing to making US society a better place to live in, to "shake people up", Lynch answers:

> Absolutely not, because then you end up making a message film. You see, I get ideas in fragments, and only when a bunch of fragments come together I say: "Oh, this is about this, or this could be about this. But there's absolutely no message, no steering anyone any which way. I just love the idea. I want to realise them [ideas] because I'm in love with them (Fox 2019—I return to Lynch and creativity in Chap. 6, which also starts with this quote).

Asked by Fox about where his ideas come from, Lynch answers: "I don't know where any of them come from. That's why I don't think I can take credit for anything I've ever done" (ibid.). Additionally, asked by David Breskin back in a 1990 interview whether he resists the idea that his films "mean something", Lynch answers: "Not a bit. But they mean different things to different people" (Breskin 2009). Given the recognizability of the Lynchian atmospheres and their mise en scène, this denial of an auteurist imprint is of course somewhat coquettish. Yet, the love of "ideas", fragments, that come to him and the open reluctance to control the reception of a work after he has finished it set viewers and visitors free to contribute with their own approach to his works:

> If there's 100 people in the audience, you're going to get 100 different interpretations, especially when things get abstract. It's beautiful. Everybody's a detective and whatever they come up with is valid in my mind (ibid.).

One precondition for defining *The Air is on Fire* as an installational exhibition is exactly the work's lack of explanatory framework. *The Air is on Fire* and other large Lynch exhibitions have been called *retrospective*. However, let me repeat in other words what I suggested above: this intermedia installational exhibition and the immersive experience it offers, more than summing up Lynch's work, *partakes* of it

as yet another genre he works with, besides film, TV, photography, music, commercials, a YouTube channel and so on. The exhibitional environment made possible the creation of a Lynchian *live* world composed of many different arts, media and designs, in which no single genre took precedence over another, and in which the audience/visitors/viewers—in still new combinations—could most literally immerse themselves.

Since *The Air is on Fire*, a lot of smaller and larger Lynch exhibitions have opened in different parts of the world. However, the 2007 Fondation Cartier exhibition is the only one I would characterize as *installational*. The strong Lynchian atmosphere created a fluctuating, yet coherent environment in which bodies moved around amongst images and sound and played their part in the creation of the exhibition as *a total media work*.

By the term *total media work* I mean, first, that the installational exhibition *The Air is on Fire* is *a work* in its own right. It is composed of a network of blurred boundaries: between the exhibition space and its surroundings (the transparency of the glass building with its complicated mirroring effects that open to the city and the Fondation Cartier garden), between the displayed works and the conspicuous mise en scène of the rooms, between the works and the atmosphere produced by the sound and the exchanges between things (the works) and people (the visitors) in Böhme's sense of exchange, and finally between visitors and works (the interactive elements of different kinds that transform visitor into participant). I follow the different blurring of boundaries in Lynch's works through the rest of this book's chapters.

Second, I see the installational exhibition as a *media* work. *The Air is on Fire* deploys and at the same time blurs boundaries between a diversity of media, materials and genres. It is in a sense a catalogue of contemporary art and media forms, which in the exhibition are all made to talk to each other and enlarge each other. *The Air is on Fire* is thus a truly intermedia work. Accordingly, and third, this installational exhibition radically dissolves boundaries between works and creates, indeed, a Lynchian atmosphere. A *total* work , *The Air is on Fire* draws attention to the fact that David Lynch's entire work is a network of parts and wholes that continuously address and expand each other. Just like *The Air is on Fire* is in itself a total media work, Lynch's entire work

can be regarded as a total media work which is continuously developing and changing.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_3

3. David Lynch and Time: Textures of Ageing

Anne Jerslev[1]
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anne Jerslev
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

When you see an aging building or a rusted bridge, you are seeing nature and man working together. If you paint over a building, there is no more magic to that building. But if it is allowed to age, then man has built it and nature has added to it—it's so organic.
—The vignette "Beauty" in Lynch (2006: 119)

Kristine McKenna: Do you think all things are beautiful as they decay or only some things?
David Lynch: All things are.
—Lynch in McKenna (2007: 35)

Much of the Lynch literature has touched upon Lynch's persistent deconstruction of continuous time and narrative coherence in *Lost Highway* , *Mulholland Drive* , *Inland Empire* , *Twin Peaks* and *Twin Peaks: The Return* (for example, Jerslev 2003; Rodley 2005 [1997]; Groys and Ujica 2007; McGowan 2007; Olson 2008; Mactaggart 2010; Nochimson 2013; Hallam 2018; Grossman and Scheibel 2020). Nochimson (2003) talks about the loop structure in *Lost Highway* and Lynch has himself, in interviews about *Lost Highway* , just like a range of authors (for example, Mactaggart 2010; Jerslev 2004; Johnson 2004; Goddard

2016), referred to the (Lacanian) idea of the Möbius structure. Furthermore, I have shown in this book's second chapter how the audio-visual creation of *atmosphere* may make temporal unfolding slow down or disappear entirely. In Chap. 6, I will discuss *the fragment* as an aesthetic strategy in Lynch's works, the way *ideas* unfold as audio-visual fragments in their own right and thereby break down coherence and continuity. However, in this chapter I discuss how, throughout his career, Lynch has *also* been fascinated with time as duration. I am not going to argue that Lynch's films are more narratively structured in accordance with straight-out causality than hitherto discussed. Rather, I look into *time's transformation of surfaces* into kinds of palimpsests across his works. This chapter is about Lynchian *surfaces*, the simultaneous appearance of different archaeological layers, organic and inorganic, which at once testifies to the passing of time but also how time imprints itself in disorderly ways on matter—on inorganic things and the body.

In the interview with Kristine McKenna that opens the catalogue to *The Air is on Fire*, Lynch said about his photographs of deserted factories, similarly to what he wrote in the vignette in *Catching the Big Fish* that opens this chapter:

> [...] the way nature goes to work on the steel, the bricks, the concrete. It's just unbelievably beautiful! A new factory is a beautiful thing but so is an aged factory from all the work they've done, work that makes so many stains and disturbances and all this stuff, and then nature on top of that ... it's a phenomenal set-up for textures. (Lynch in McKenna 2007: 34)

The two opening statements are about *surfaces* and *textures*. They pay homage to an aesthetics of surfaces and processes of transformation over time. The first of the quotes is an abstract statement about the relationship between nature and culture. The quote above addresses factories in particular and the relationship between buildings, the traces of work(ers) in buildings and nature's imprint on machines and materials. All three quotes are about the beauty in *looks of ageing*, how material objects transform over time and make up textured surfaces through this process. What Lynch is praising could be called *textures of*

ageing, time's transformation of organic and inorganic surfaces. This process, in which man has surrendered his material product to nature's persistent interventions—allowing materiality to age—is, in Lynch's word, magic. Whereas, he adds, if the process of ageing is brought to a halt or disguised ("painted over"—just like a face modulated by anti-ageing technology), magic disappears.

To me, the more far-reaching meaning in this vision about the power of time to transform matter is that it creates a counter-image to "the pathologizing of ageing" (Cooke 2009), which is ubiquitous in contemporary (popular) culture. In his articles about the "painting over" of the face by "time-fighting" cosmeceutical technologies—a system of painting or "writing" not as the leaving of marks but in the sense of *erasure* (Chion 2006)—Australian media scholar Grayson Cooke asks rhetorically what is so wrong with time. By asking the question he challenges the temporal logic in a contemporary "culture of quick change" (to borrow a phrase from Vivian Sobchack (2000)). Cooke continues his critical reflections upon contemporary culture's understanding of time by challenging anti-ageing advocates in the following way:

> What happens to time when we are "fixing the things that go wrong with us faster than we are encountering them?" In some way this is to "cross the time barrier", it is to go faster than one's own time, the time of one's biology and the effects of time *on* the body, and thus it is also to cross an existential barrier wherein human existence is in no way a matter of biological aging but a question, fundamentally, of *technoscientific making* and temporalization. (Cooke 2009: 3, italics in original)

In Lynch's many different images of textures of ageing, I see an effort by aesthetic means to equally oppose the prevalent understanding of time in Western culture, which Cooke calls into question. Lynch procures a sense of phenomenological time and the "natural" process of ageing and acknowledges time as duration. However, in Lynch, this sense of temporality never unfolds along a straight linear logic of causes and effects; I see this uneven ageing process in the images of the ageing face in his films as well. In this chapter, I start by engaging with some of

Lynch's favourite terms, "abstraction" and "texture". I then go on to discuss how Lynch's vision of textures of ageing shows through two clusters of examples. First I engage with his photographs of time working on industrial landscapes and second, the way temporality inscribes itself on the surface of the human body. I focus on Lynch's choice of older characters—of which there are many in his works. I scrutinize the close-ups of Alvin Straight's face in *The Straight Story* . And I go into Lynch's casting of the same actors over time. I am particularly interested in his use of the same actors in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, who have aged 25 years since *Twin Peaks*, and how this choice adds to the series an emotional layer that comes from the "real" ageing of the actors and actresses in question. I focus on the scenes that feature the Log Lady/Catherine Coulson and Carrie Page/Laura Palmer/Sheryl Lee and argue that the return of the actresses adds a specific layer of embodied temporality to the series. However, before I turn to textures *of ageing* , I discuss Lynch's preoccupation with *textures* and think through the relationship between textures, transformation and abstraction in the Lynchian world.

Textures, Abstractions, Transformations

In interviews, David Lynch has talked a lot over the years about textures, his fascination with the tactile surfaces of things and materials. Back in 1989, Lynch said to interviewer John Powers in a TV documentary about the director's fascination with dead organisms and the way they metamorphose and, when attached to a canvas, transform into a "moving painting":[1]

> They have their own sort of texture. I always say that as soon as you take the name off something and you see that this is an abstract texture, a lot of things that you wouldn't normally think of as beautiful are very beautiful. Those are interesting textures and so they've got their own beauty to them. As soon as you realize what they are, they're sort of terrifying.[2]

The close-up and particularly the ultra-close-up have been his aesthetic means for creating textures as abstract patterns and producing a

sensuous feeling of the physical materiality of surfaces:

> Have you ever seen a little rotted animal? I love looking at those things, just as much as I love to look at a close-up of some tree bark, or a small bug, or a cup of coffee, or a piece of pie. You get in close and the textures are wonderful.[3] (The vignette "Texture" in Lynch 2006: 121)

The point is that the close-up makes strange the world of material objects. It removes from the depicted objects their recognizable 'thingness' and, hence, their referentiality to the filmic world in favour of abstract patterns and a sensuous feeling of the tactility of surfaces, just like Lynch explains in the second quote that opens this chapter. With the close-up, the object turns into "an autonomous entity, a fragment 'for itself'" (Doane 2003: 90). Close-ups decontextualize, create spatial disorientation and fragments—which to Lynch is magic and beautiful. Close-ups and ultra-close-ups at once show and produce textures:

> When you only see a part, it's even stronger than seeing the whole. The whole might have a logic, but out of its context, the fragment takes on a tremendous value of abstraction. (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 231)

Crucial to Lynch's fascination with textures is their visual appearance as *abstractions*, aesthetic objects that do not mean anything except as aesthetic expressions. Textures are what Michel Chion has called "micro-reliefs", "fragments from the natural continuum" (2006: 185). Like Lynch puts forth in the two quotes at the beginning of this section, the textured close-up points at the non-referential. It points at *mystery* as not only another world but also what is lacking in the realistic, transparent, referential image. Like darkness, visual beauty—beautiful because it is complex—comes into existence when there is something in the image you cannot really see, something that determines the atmosphere of the image from some hidden invisible space , or when you look at something and cannot see what it is.

This spatial disorientation or spatial impossibility the close-ups of texture create is prominently established in the opening shots of many Lynch films. They start with ultra-close-ups of some hardly

recognizable pattern, and when the camera tracks back or zooms out, it constitutes space and makes identifiable what we have been looking at. As such, openings perform the rhetorical operation of the synecdoche. There is a move from textured abstraction to the realization that what we have looked at was a part of a recognizable whole. A few examples: after the credit sequence in *Wild at Heart*, which shows an ultra-close-up of the burning tip of a cigarette and an ultra-close-up of an explosive fire, there is a dissolve to a shot from below of a painted, slightly vaulted surface. When the camera slowly turns and tracks down it turns out to be the painted ceiling of an opulent hall of a theatre house. In the opening of *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* , flickering dots form into flickering lines, which can finally be recognized, as the camera slowly zooms out, as coming from a television screen.[4] After the credits in *The Straight Story* , the camera circles over a greenish-yellow rugged texture reminiscent of a sisal hemp rug. It is impossible to identify the object and its scale; likewise, it is impossible to decide whether the camera is close or at a distance from it. When the camera slowly turns upwards and there is a simultaneous dissolve to a more horizontal long shot it turns out that the textured image was a "close-up on the dress of nature" (ibid.): a section of a corn field (see also Chion's description of this "unidentified texture" (ibid.: 205)). Along the same line of tactile images, in *Blue Velvet* credits roll against the background of an ultra-close-up of a wavering blue velvet curtain. Finally, the credit sequence in *Dune* shows close-ups on the drifting sand of the rugged dunes on the desert planet (I return to this kind of tactile image in Lynch's short film experiments and commercials in Chap. 5).

The opening of *Mulholland Drive* creates spatial disorientation and a sense of image texture by other means. The energetically jitterbugging young people seem to dance as if weightless in unlimited space—a capacity that befalls some characters in Lynch's universe. They are evidently digitally duplicated and superimposed onto a monochrome lavenderish background screen, on which the dancers' black shadows are projected as if by chance. In contrast to the sculptured textures in the above-mentioned openings, the jitterbug dancers convey a sense of two-dimensional paper dolls, which are copied on top of each other and placed randomly on a surface (for descriptions of the film's opening montage, see also Nochimson 2013: 92–94, and Olson 2008: 526).

There is no sense of spatial proportions in this opening, which looks like a dreamy abstraction of dancing couples floating among each other. The abstract, textured ultra-close-ups in Lynch's openings create perceptual disorientation and an almost tactile presence of surfaces. The *Mulholland Drive* opening, by contrast, creates in a paradoxical way a tactile sense of the computerized copying and moving around of discrete image elements.[5]

Abstraction is a tricky term in the Lynch vocabulary. What Olson (2008: 193) calls "the director's beloved 'abstractions'" refers to different things—what it does to Lynch scholars as well (for example, in the works of Olson (2008), Seesslen (2005) and Nieland (2012)).

Even though abstraction is many things to Olson, he comes up with a definition in his chapter on *The Elephant Man* : Abstraction is "those passages that intermix dream and reality, the concrete exterior world with the inner cosmos of fluid thoughts and feelings" (Olson 2008: 113). Moreover, to Olson, abstractions signify "mood and emotion" (ibid.: 381).

Drawing on discussions about abstract painting, Georg Seesslen, for his part, thinks of abstraction in broader terms. To Seesslen, abstraction in Lynch is "a struggle with reality, a turning away from and towards at one and the same time" (Seesslen 2005: 248), a form that "liberates itelf from the trap of representation" (ibid.: 249—my translations).[6] To Seesslen, there are two different kinds of abstractions in Lynch: the geometric and the organic, expressive. It goes for both forms that they transgress the merely ornamental and take on a life of their own within the larger narrative. Even though abstractions are without spatial contours and people, they interfere in strange ways with the film's protagonists. Seesslen argues that an abstraction is more than what it appears to be: "It is more than what it represents" (ibid.: 249).[7] Or even less: the geometrical as pure measurement and the organic Pollock-like as pure bodily expression.

Seesslen's point is that the two forms of abstraction may be united in Lynch's work. The *Mulholland Drive* opening would be an example of this: here bodies are at once visible and appear like imprints. Another example is the doubly exposed images of the yellow lines on the road in the opening and closing images in *Lost Highway* . The strange superimposition, which creates a dizzying perception, may be

compared to the traces of the body's work with paint in an abstract expressionistic painting (the organic), whereas the simple image (the lines of the roadsides getting nearer in the distance and the illuminated centre lines) takes a geometrical form. A final example of Seesslen's organic, expressive abstractions would be the famous close-up of the black glittering beetle inferno at the beginning of *Blue Velvet* , whereas the textured images in the opening credits I have mentioned would be an example of the geometric abstraction.

The large diptych *Bob Sees Himself Walking Toward a Formidable Abstraction* (2000, 167.6 × 353.3 cm) (Illustration 3.1) conjoins the referential and abstraction and explores their phenomenological differences. The painting is part of a series of large mixed-media paintings from the year 2000, in which appears a figure called Bob (which Lynch has repeatedly denied refers to *Twin Peaks*'s Bob as I pointed out in Chap. 2: "[S]ometimes they kind of cross-pollinate, but mostly they're their own thing" (in Siegal 2019)). Except for one painting in the Bob series, the colour tone is yellow-brownish, as if nature and every depicted item were wrapped up in a gigantic fire. *Bob Sees Himself Walking Toward a Formidable Abstraction*[8] shows a figure hanging in a parachute under a grey cloud. To the right is a large black monolith painted in rough thick strokes, which makes the traces of the bodily act of painting and paint itself visible (Huijts 2018). The two forms are placed at exactly the same distance from the middle of the broad painting, and across the whole painting , the letters making up the title flow in air in six rows. Maybe the parachutist will hit the black abstraction, or maybe the two different kinds of mass, the organic and the inorganic, are just there beside each other for us to behold. As there is no discernible difference between sky and ground, the heavy black monolith seems, just like the parachutist, to be floating. In contrast to the parachutist, but similar to another painting in this series, *Bob's Anti-Gravity Factory*, in which a factory with three chimneys has apparently lifted from the ground, the black mass seems to defy gravity. Consequently, the monolith appears mysteriously light and heavy at one and the same time. Because of the rough strokes of paint, it appears a bit relief-like, a black density of *mass* in both the English and the German meaning of the word—matter and measure. Yet at the same time it is slightly transparent as a touch of the brownish background is

visible through the black. In contrast to the small parachutist, the monolith protrudes as a black *thing*, *a mystery* (like *Rock With Seven Eyes*), which illustrates nicely Lynch's idea of abstraction and the way abstractions invite the mind to go wandering into unknown territory. "I like things that have a kernel of something in them. They have to be abstract," he says (in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 63). The easily recognizable, the unopaque, the completely monochrome surface does not have this kernel.[9]

Illustration 3.1 *Bob Sees Himself Walking Towards a Formidable Abstraction*, painting. © David Lynch

In Lynch's own use of the term, abstraction is multifaceted. It is an aesthetic concept, which points at the enigmatically non-referential, as exemplified above. It also refers to a general, a-historical quality in a work, "a kernel of something", which provides the work with a permanence and meaning across time. First, the term denotes an ability in visual language to speak of what is difficult to formulate in words, for example difficult emotions, but also more existential anxieties and feelings provoked by more concrete incidents, like participating in his daughter's birth, which was "not so much what you see as an abstraction you feel" (Lynch 1990, cited in Olson 2008: 29). Second, abstraction is a way of formulating that which is not easily understandable or easy to explain. Abstraction detaches the visual from

mainstream film language and allows the spectatorial mind to drift in any direction.[10] Therefore, to Lynch, abstractions are not popular with the movie industry people:

> [T]hey need to understand what it is they're going to make. So, it decreases the chance of any abstraction. Abstractions are not something you wanna throw money at! (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 231)

Third, abstractions are what is beautiful simply because they are non-signifying and can be contemplated in their own, decontextualized right (this would apply to Seesslen's understanding of abstraction). Abstractions, in Lynch's aesthetics, afford a myopic gaze, which frames a section of a larger whole and transforms it into a separate world of its own with its own beauty. Lynch formulated it like this in an early interview with Kristine McKenna:

> Take an old used Band-Aid in the street. It's got some dirt around the edges and the rubber part has formed some little black balls, and you see the stain of a little blood and some yellow on it, a little ointment. It's in the gutter next to some dirt and a rock and a little twig. If you were to see a photograph of that not knowing what it was, it would be unbelievably beautiful.[11] (Lynch in McKenna 1992: 27)

This quotation illuminates Lynch's textural sensibility: the transformation of the recognizable and, hence, unmysterious to the mysteriously unrecognizable. Herein lies beauty and herein lies aesthetic value. However, the opposite may also be the case. In some of his larger paintings (*Mister Redman* (2000) and *Dialogue During a Picnic* (2017), for example), pieces of Band-Aid in combination with a range of other strange objects are plastered onto the surface. In a sense, these large paintings require an impossible way of looking: when one refrains from taking the whole painting in and moves closer to take a look at a segment, it is revealed that the strange, almost sloppy light brown square texture is made of Band-Aid upon Band-Aid. So, the close-up creates texture and recognizability at the same time. Not

beauty but a kind of hyperrealism is attached to the everyday object. In this context of a Lynch painting, the Band-Aid does not transform into an abstract object. It remains a weird everyday object plastered onto the surface of an everyday object.

Besides being emblematic of the opening of many of Lynch's films, close-ups' and ultra-close-ups' transformation of recognizable objects into textured abstractions is also significant in Lynch's photographs of female nudes, collected and published by the Fondation Cartier in the photo book *Nudes* (Lynch 2007). Particularly some of the colour photos are familiar Lynch motifs, such as ultra-close-ups of heavily painted red lips (as in *Lost Highway* and *Blue Velvet*) or eyes (as in the opening of *Dune* and *The Elephant Man*). Some of the photos bear resemblance to some of Man Ray's photographs. Other close-ups show recognizable body fragments, like a hand with painted nails, a profiled face or a leg in a high-heeled shoe. In these photos, every pore, every spot and impurity in the skin stand out in almost hyperreal sharpness. However, most of the black and white photos consist of blurry "skin textures".

They show fragments of body parts, which are barely recognizable as anything but skin. The camera is so close that pores and single body hairs protrude in an uncannily alien manner. In a similar defamiliarizing way, the curve of a breast, the nipple, the bend of a knee or the knuckles of a hand appear as surrealistic body fragments (Illustration 3.2). These fragments are often even further obscured by the lighting, which erases any distinction between body part and the black background or shadow. Not only are most motifs wrapped in large shadows, but some of the photographs obscure the female body in white smoke and create another layer of texture on the image surface.[12] The photos are reminiscent of Edward Weston's close-ups of nude body parts from the second half of the 1920s and 1930s, and they share the interest in fragments. However, Weston's body surfaces are sharper and smoother than Lynch's, less textured. Weston uses close-ups, Lynch ultra-close-ups.

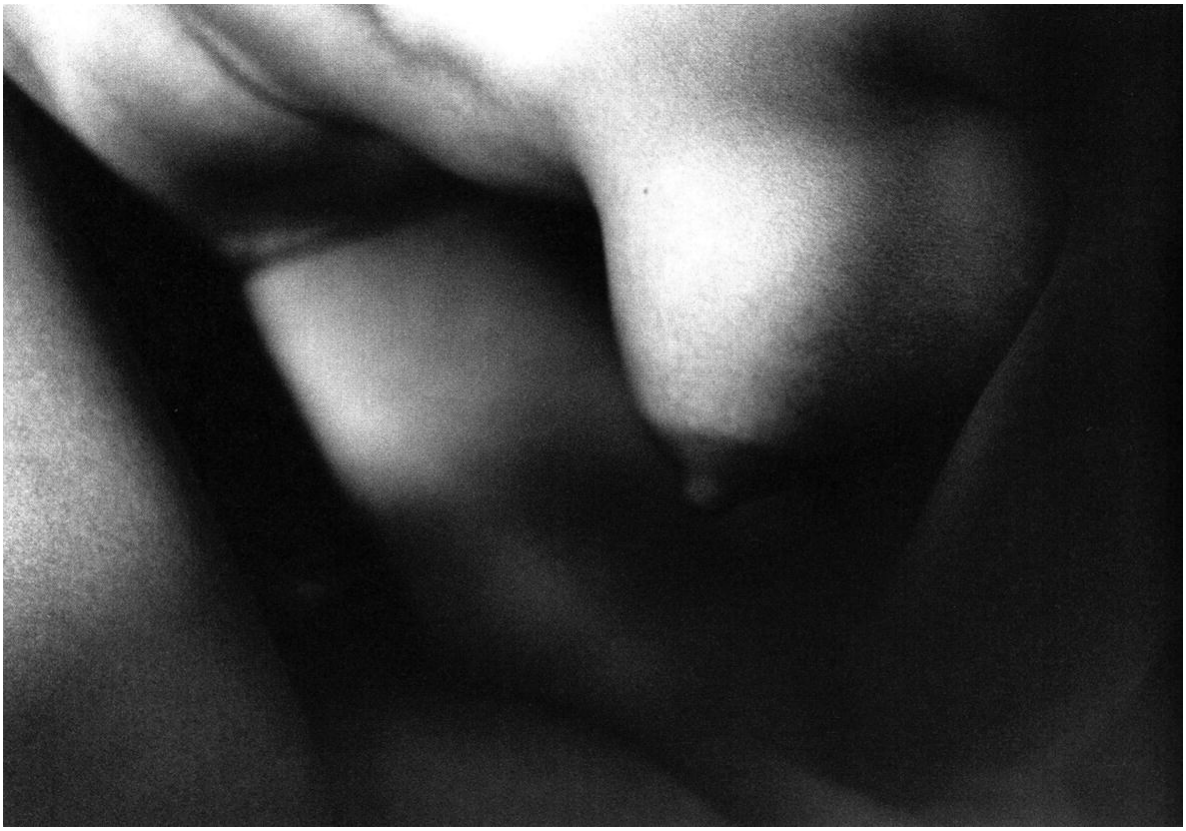


Illustration 3.2 Blurry close up of skin from *Nudes*, photograph. © David Lynch

Just as it is hard to determine how one should make sense of the opening close-ups of textures in the films, it is hard to figure out what we are looking at in many of the black and white photos. They linger in a field between extreme visibility and invisibility, and the colour photos oscillate between hyperrealism and surrealism. The blurred boundaries between visibility and invisibility not only make it difficult to decide what is hidden in shadow and what appears in light, but the extreme out-of-focus close-ups reveal and obscure at one and the same time. As such, the motif and its formal contours are transformed into abstractions, which leaves the viewer at once confused and enthralled. The focus on skin confers upon the stereotypical marks of femininity in many of the colour photographs a coarseness, which resists gendered fetichization. Together with the close camera distance, which looks into segments instead of wholes, the photographs invite a meta-comment on the pictorial genre "the female nude".[13]

The blurred, textured black and white fragments resemble what Grønstad (2020) has called *an aesthetics of opacity /illegibility*,

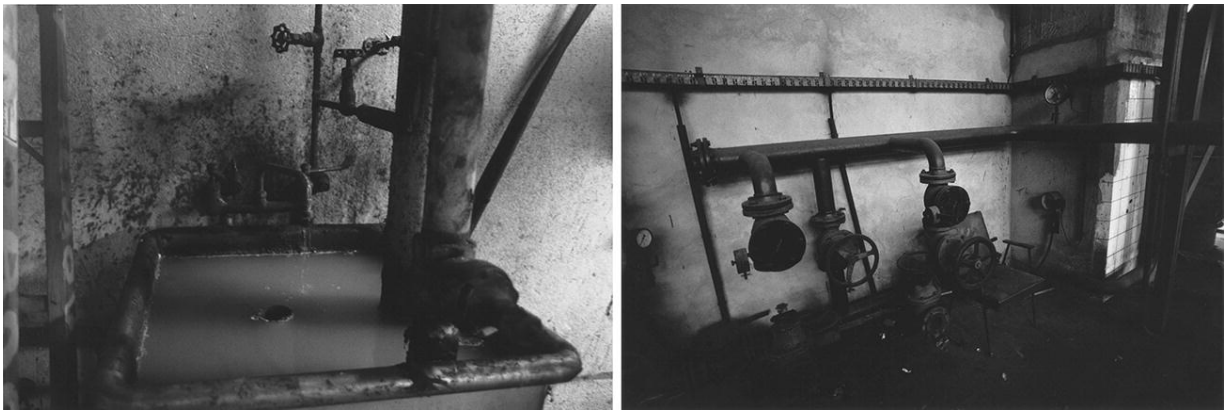
Christine Ross (2008) *precarious aesthetics* and Camilla Moraja (2014) more generally *precariousness in art*. According to Christine Ross, precarious aesthetics is "a setting into play of a range of aesthetic strategies that solicit from the spectator a perception that lacks in security, certainty and opticality" (Ross 2008: 9). It creates "an unsettling of vision that occurs at the viewer-image interface, a quality addressed to the viewer that troubles the full visual access to the image" (Ross 2008: 8). Blurrings are one such strategy, oscillations between visibility and invisibility another, and a third the ultra-close-ups and the resulting blurry framing of the photographed object—whether it be a body part or a segment of a corn field.[14] Camilla Maroja (2014), for her part, emphasizes how the instability and fragility produced by precarious visualities releases the spectatorial gaze to more performative actions and rejects definitive interpretations—which accords with Lynch's emphasis on laying open his works to any interpretation by the viewer.

I return to the idea of the precarious and the opaque in this book's concluding chapter. As regards the hardly recognizable, I am interested in Lynchian surfaces and the sense of texture and temporality attached to them in this chapter.

Textures of Ageing—Abandoned Factory Photography and Snowmen

Kristine McKenna remarks dryly in *Room to Dream* that throughout the almost 40 years Lynch has taken photographs, two motifs have been recurrent: women and abandoned factories. While the nude photographs do not depict *ageing*—lines and wrinkles are not part of the female nude texture in *Nudes* —ageing and temporality are what Lynch's factory photographs are about. Even though many of the photographs are long shots—of a factory facade without windows and debris floating everywhere, of a broken ladder between the curves of large metal tanks on a worn-out soiled concrete floor or roughly defunct muddy store areas inhabited by no one—they are in a sense also abstractions. I hereby mean that they exude an atmosphere of bygone time. They portray deserted factories that were once used for

producing things and creating value by working people. Some of the photographs (for example, in the first pages of Petra Giloy-Hirtz' *David Lynch: The Factory Photographs* (2014)) bring to mind the most unfocused nudes: texture, smoke, blurred outlines. Others are geometrically shaped long shots or medium-long shots of fragments of buildings taken from oblique angles, while some focus on the complicated building of power pylons and rich constructions of buildings (reminiscent of German photographers Bernd and Hilla Becher's pictures of industrial buildings, which they shot over decades) or bridges (like in 1920s straight photography, for example Walker Evans's early geometrical urban pictures). Moreover, there are close-ups of rusty pipes and taps, hoses, water having almost filled a dirty and rusty sink hanging on a wall, stains that indexically point to "the work that was done there" (Illustrations 3.3 and 3.4), close-ups of electrical machineries, wires hanging loose everywhere, pipes without cladding, loose hoists and utensils that have lost their utility but remain as traces of the structured repetitions of which a working day in a factory was composed.



Illustrations 3.3 and 3.4 Two of Lynch's factory photographs. © David Lynch

However, the close-ups of remains are also just photographs of leftover *things*. I borrow philosophy professor Dag T. Andersson's beautiful words for what can be found in forgotten places to characterize Lynch's particular gaze on industrial remnants, the way he observes details and the larger environment: "Because the things we find in the place do not point straight away to any specific use or purpose, the distinctness of their appearance is enhanced: the iron pipe

and the link of chain come into sight with the independence of a small sculpture" (Andersson 2014: 289). Lynch's gaze upon the abandoned factories is aesthetic. However, by focusing on texture and things' 'thing-ness', he eschews nostalgia.

The photographed imaginary of the working factory condenses many of Lynch's sensorial interests: "the happy sound of machinery and generating electricity, lots of smoke and big sound in a working factory, and that's a beautiful music" (Lynch in Giloy-Hirtz 2014: 14). What also interested him in factories and industry was "the power, I think. It makes me feel good to see giant machinery, you know, working, dealing with molten metal. And I like fire and smoke" (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 110).[15] Finally, he was interested in machines as a form that does not exist anymore; as Lynch said in an interview in 1990 when interviewer Michael Sragow observes that machines today all look anonymously alike: "Yes, the character of the machine is gone" (Sragow 1999: 204).

In Lynch's photographs of deserted factories, we find lots of "weird" details of all sorts of machinery. The engines appear like dark dead monoliths without the power they used to contain. But the photographs nevertheless apply to the rusty iron a sense of machinery.

During the shooting of *The Elephant Man* in England, Lynch started photographing industry buildings on a large scale. Before that, he had sought out decaying urban areas in Los Angeles and he had continuously taken industrial images "on location scouts for films" (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 110). But as he recalls his journey to locate factories, he was late. Only fragments were left: "I'd missed the real stuff by at least ten years, maybe even more" (ibid., see Lynch and McKenna 2018 for similar expressions).[16] Instead, *The Elephant Man*'s mise en scène of a dirty and humid, late nineteenth-century London, its chimneys erupting with black smoke from the use of coal and the working of enormous amounts of large basement pipes and machinery in machine rooms, is made to resemble some of the photographs. Furthermore, Lynch found something else in the "forgotten places" (Andersson 2014) that had not yet been torn down, turned into rubbish dumps for the waste of the present or, vice versa, not yet been rebuilt and turned into commercialized spaces. "The chance for things to age and to become ruin has diminished in the age of turbo capitalism," says

Andreas Huyssen (2006: 10); Lynch's industrial photos document exactly the ageing of things.

The remnants of industrial buildings and their electric infrastructures are still there, though. In that sense, Lynch was in time to be able to document the process of ageing of physical objects and spaces of a particular kind. Before they completely disappeared *and* before they were "painted over"—there is a remarkable absence of graffiti in these photographs.[17] The photographs are of abandoned factory spaces. Yet as archaeologist Thora Petursdottir (2014) observes in her problematization of the idea of an abandoned space, "as soon as you *see* this affluent landscape of things and its subtle dynamics, it actually represents anything but lack, absence or discontinuity—indeed, anything but *abandonment*" (Petursdottir 2014: 345, italics in original). In Lynch's photographs—in the close-ups of utensils, remnants of machinery and electronic equipment, rain-wet floors and flaking paint on walls, and the long shots of deserted factory halls and outside environments—all these objects are in one sense abandoned. Yet at the same time, they are still alive and changing—man and nature are still working together on the surfaces.

Photographs of ruins are not about lack, according to Petursdottir. By contrast, in the photographs of the ruins of industrial buildings, Lynch captures how the deserted, quiet factory has its own magic:

> In photography, it often seems to me that all you need is just a word. It could be as simple as the word "industrial", and that just fires you up to go to different places to see what industry is giving you. Then it's about the way the light goes, the shapes, the decay. These big, beautiful things and how they are being eaten by nature. That's just incredible, beautiful, unreal.[18] (Lynch in O'Hagan 2007)

Even though it was not Lynch's intention to go for closed-down factories and his photographs may be simply regarded as "spectacle[s] of the corroded surface" as suggested in the *Dark Splendor* catalogue (Diekmann 2009: 210), Lynch's industrial photography documents an era under capitalism that has disappeared in post-industrialism—industrial capitalism's cooperation between bodies and machines. They

do not document industrial capitalism's exploitation of bodies. The photographs capture an atmosphere of past activity in these "marginal spaces" (Edensor 2005), which used to be anything but marginal. Apart from a few photographs of gigantic chimneys with white smoke erupting from the top, there is nothing going on in the industrial spaces except for nature's working on the old buildings and the continuous transformation of their surfaces. These places are not completely dead, according to Lynch: "You are witnessing a dead body and watching nature bring it back to the elements" (Giloy-Hirtz 2014: 14)—which is, to Lynch, "beautiful", precisely because of the organic processes taking place on the material. The worn-out and decaying interiors and exteriors of factory buildings are great because "they were old and nature has gone to work on them so they were rotting—like corpses" (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 110).

This quote addresses precisely what fascinates Lynch in textures of ageing, the magic inherent in time's transformation of organic matter—and additionally, how these metamorphoses bear evidence of the organic. So, the beauty in textures of ageing is not only destroyed by "painting over" but also by artificial materials:

> All these great old factories were being replaced by these little plastic and aluminium structures that had zero visual power. And there was no smoke, no fire, no soot. (Lynch in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 110)

No textures, no signs of the natural ageing process, no signs of time as unfolding means in Lynch's thinking lack of mystery, lack of "world", lack of the subtle continuous transformations that make us curious observers of the world surrounding us. Lynch's photographs insist on the value in incompleteness and brokenness, in the traces of erosion left on materials, qualities which, as argued by cultural geographer Caitlin Desilvey (2006), are regarded by capitalist culture mostly as negative, as loss of value and usefulness.

Kristine McKenna observes that the photographs "have an ineffable softness; it's as if they've been printed on velvet", and she draws attention to their grey-toned kind of black and whiteness (Lynch and McKenna 2018: 153). Her characterization points at a clear difference

between Lynch's textured, atmospheric photos and the German Becher couple's scientific, formalist and decontextualized way of photographing the architecture of industrial capitalism, which they started in the late 1950s.[19] Contrary to the Becher photography, *atmosphere* is what is prominently distributed across the surface of Lynch's photographs. Atmosphere emanates from the ruinous textures of ageing and creates an environment that is at once past and contemporary. The photographs are testimonies to American and European industrial history and contemporary changes in capitalist production. They are also filled with the bygone transformed into fragments and debris and "nature working" on it continuously. The photographs emit an atmosphere of an omnipresent transformation process, which, to borrow a quote from anthropologist Michael Taussig's discussion of bog bodies, lingers in a "suspension between life and death, together with the awakening of life in death" (Taussig 2002: 30).

As cultural and social geographer Tim Edensor suggests (2005b: 829), these sites are not "over and done with". Lynch's photographs do not hold the melancholy of the ruin, and they are not picturesque. Neither do they subscribe to the gothic sensibility that, according to Edensor (2005), can be attached to representations of the contemporary ruin. Even though close-ups of the textured debris of machinery, wires, hoses and so on defamiliarize what were once familiar and meaningful objects in the structuring repetitiveness characteristic of industrial work, Lynch's contemporary photographic gaze captures how time has worked independently and inescapably on objects and invested the surfaces with layers of both the past and the present.

Lynch's images of the ruins of factory spaces captured in the medium of photography is in line with Tim Edensor's writing about the industrial ruin as a space that opposes order and fixed meaning (Edensor 2005, 2005a, 2005b). In Edensor's lovely concrete descriptions of the characteristics of the factory ruin, he emphasizes the "disordering of a previously regulated space" (Edensor 2005b: 314). Ruins are in "a state of indeterminacy", Edensor says (2005a: 836). Ruins are blurring boundaries between the recognizable and the unrecognizable, the expected and the unexpected, the formed and the

disorganized, the more than visible (the structures of the buildings being laid bare by time's processes of demolition) and the invisible (the buildings as they once looked). These clashes create new connections between the fragments, new ways of looking at the 'thing-ness' of the remaining things: "the ways in which a confrontation with the strange tactilities, smells, sounds and textures of discarded things and ruined space can defamiliarize the ordinary feel of stuff" (ibid.). These reflections echo what Lynch finds beautiful and fascinating in processes of ageing, and, as I see it, what his photographs tries to capture. "The material status of objects in ruins is transient", Edensor observes (2005b: 319). The industrial ruin and its objects have lost much of the meaning and all of the use value that was formerly attributed to them. Instead, while disorderly unfamiliar they "promise the unexpected" (Edensor 2005: 4)—and are, in that sense, magical. Moreover, they gain an abstract aesthetic value, which in the thinking of Lynch may make the mind go wandering.

Edensor's reflections on processes of decay come close to Lynch's way of capturing textures (of ageing): in the factory ruin, "objects can resonate with a powerful beauty wherein they seem most akin to pieces of sculpture" (Edensor 2015b: 321). The factory ruin viewed through both Lynch's tactile camera eye and Tim Edensor's observant eyes consists of historical *fragments*, each of which "takes on a tremendous value of abstraction", to repeat what I quoted Lynch for saying above (I expand on the idea of the fragment in Chap. 7 of this book), fragments that "cannot be woven into an eloquent narrative" (Edensor 2015a: 846). The traces of technologies of the immediate past and the invisible echoes of past labour and working life glue to the photographs and create a dynamic temporal atmosphere of present absences and the present in the absent. It is as if the photographs capture some undefinable yet present memories that materialize as *textures of ageing*. Lynch's photographs create a felt atmosphere of humans and machines working together—once upon a time—before material labour had given way to immaterial and when machines were still large, heavy and plump and did not look like each other.

Lynch's photographs of the transformed presence of material absence memorialize a bygone production process that they view through a contemporary eye. They also create unofficial monuments to

the vicissitudes of time. In their spatial alterity they remind us of Foucault's idea of the *heterotopia* (1986 [1967]). Foucault understands heterotopia's places as "outside of all places" (1986 [1967]: 24) or "counter-sites" (ibid.) in culture, places "in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted" (ibid.). Hence the heterotopia is at once a space radically outside and related to other spaces (cf. also Martin 2014: 138) (I return to the heterotopia by the very end of this chapter).

Lynch's series *Snowmen* from the beginning of the 1990s (which I mentioned on page 28) published by Fondation Cartier simultaneously with the *Air is on Fire* exhibition bears a similar stamp of time and textures of ageing.

Just like the factory photographs , the series of similar black and white photos depict a temporality of in-betweenness. They capture snowmen about to melt but not completely melted on front lawns, on which the snow is also melting away and reveals dark spots of the grass beneath (Illustration 3.5). The environment in all photos is the same, but the snowmen are remarkably different apart from being in different stages of melting. Some wear a scarf or a hat, some are merely a naked outline, some have arms and eyes and an almost uncannily smiling mouth (Lynch has called the snowmen "aliens in everybody's yard" (Brubach 2007)). One snowman is still whole, even though the snow on the lawn has almost melted away, one has melted into an abject form and one has broken in two. All snowmen have dark spots on their white bodies as if there had been too little snow to actually make big snowmen.

Illustration 3.5 *Snowmen* photograph. © David Lynch

What unites the snowman photographs with the factory photographs is that they are devoid of people. The windows of the houses are dark but disclose the contours of curtains behind the glass or reflect the naked trees outside. In one photograph a naked bulb is lit over the door, in another there is a parked bicycle, in a third a slight sense of smoke from a chimney indicates that someone is living in the house. Otherwise the only traces of life around the houses are the snowmen, which are obviously manufactured by someone living in the houses. They stand on the lawns with their faces towards the street, as evidence of "man and nature working together". The photographs are all long shots. The houses and the snowmen are captured as if from the point of view of someone passing by on the pavement or in a car. Even more than the factory photographs, they display an atmosphere of emptiness as if the snowmen themselves were being deserted by those who made them. Some of them look as if they were waving and welcoming passers-by—but in vain. The bleak photographs are almost absurd, and their atmosphere is an atmosphere of desolation. Hence,

the *Snowmen* photographs attach to the playfulness and repetitiveness of the everyday suburban space embodied by the snowmen an uncanny feeling of unhomeliness.

Textures of Ageing—Alvin's Face in *The Straight Story*

I now turn to a different texture of ageing: the way time is marked on the ageing face in *The Straight Story*, first and foremost the face of the stubborn protagonist Alvin Straight.

By way of its simplicity and narrative straightness, *The Straight Story* (1999) has been criticized by some reviewers for not being a proper Lynch film. Moreover, the film has been criticized for procuring a stereotypical image of the American mainland: "[T]his is a film made by David Lynch the sometime Eagle Scout from Missoula, Montana, not David Lynch the inspired sicko behind *Blue Velvet* and *Eraserhead* " (Jackson 1999: 57). In a similar vein, Hoberman (1999) and later Johnson (2004), in his somewhat idiosyncratic book, claim that *The Straight Story* proves that Lynch is a conservative film-maker. In his harsh analysis, Johnson argues that the portrait of the American mainland supports Reagan's and Bush's mythological narratives: "The film pretends to realism, except that Lynch's vision of America in *The Straight Story*, even more mythical than the Republican National Committee's version, does not exist" (Johnson 2004: 138).

In arguing against Johnson, Todd McGowan (2007) defends the film as a fantasy world that does not support but, rather, critically reveals "the fantasmatic status of the typical myths of the American heartland" (McGowan 2007: 179). Lynch has himself argued that it was "the most experimental film I've made" (Lynch and McKenna 2018: 405). Evidently, he meant that in contrast to the bleak and violent atmosphere of most of his works, this was an exercise in telling another story in another way. *The Straight Story* is a story of the communities that arise in chance meetings between people (which Lynch would return to with the web project *Interview Project* , which I discuss at length in the next chapter) and the mutual trust that is the precondition for these meetings. And, of course, the title of the film is an auteurist marking that points somewhat coquettishly to Lynch's previous film

Lost Highway (1997), which is anything but straight and whose complicated narrative about twisted identities creates the film's uncanny and dark atmosphere.

Georg Seesslen (2007) proposes that in contrast to *Lost Highway* , *The Straight Story* is not a story about dissociation but about union, not about split identity but about healing, not about uncontrollable rage but about reconciliation with the lost half, the brother. However, it goes for Seesslen as well as for others who have written illuminatingly about the film that they argue for (hint at) darker depth and a lack of proper narrative closure in the film and suggest interesting readings against the grain. Accordingly, following along the same somewhat provocative line as Lynch's own take on his film—at least in hindsight[20]—Slavoj Zizek (2008) asked in a text on Lacan.com:

> what if the "straight" hero of Lynch's last film is effectively much more subversive than the weird characters who people his previous films? [...] What, then, if THIS is the ultimate message of Lynch's film—that ethics is "the most dark and daring of all conspiracies", that the ethical subject is the one who effectively threatens the existing order, in contrast to the long series of Lynchean weird perverts (Baron Harkonnen in *Dune* , Frank in *Blue Velvet*, Bobby Peru in *Wild at Heart*...) who ultimately sustain it?

Hardly, I think. I agree more with Martha Nochimson (2013), who in her analysis of the film talks about "the clean lines of the journey" and claims that *The Straight Story* is not "really Lynchian, since in his films Lynch has never been a fan of unstoppable determination—or linearity" (Nochimson 2013: 61). She appreciates the film's warm humanity and "the lovingly rigid motivation driving Alvin's story" (ibid.). Yet she also asks the question: "How can a man like Alvin exist in the imagination of David Lynch?" (ibid.: 63). Her answer is twofold and partly contradicts the "clean lines of the journey" argument. On the one hand, Lynch pulls it off because he concentrates on exactly this story, a journey from one destination to another during a demarcated span of time. On the other hand, Nochimson argues that darker tensions lurk beneath the surface story and therefore Lynch does indeed not pull this

straight story off. Throughout the film Alvin's project and his point of view are interrupted by "traces that Alvin's vision is only a small part of an uncertain cosmos" (ibid.: 82). Consequently, Nochimson questions the seemingly obvious coherence and linearity of the narrative. She argues that the information we get concerning primarily Rose, her father and their pasts is incoherent and therefore occasions a range of questions (about Rose and her children being taken away from her, about Alvin's years of drinking, about the reason for his break-up with his brother), which the film does not answer. It has loose ends and inconsistencies and it has past traumatic incidents (Alvin's participation in WW2, which we hear about in the only scene in the film that uses non-realistic sound). So, Nochimson's point is that even though the film is evidently not as sinister as Lynch's other films, there is still darkness and disruptions.

Not least I am intrigued by Nochimson's observation of the film's negation of conventions for portraying geographical direction in the American road movie. In "reality", she observes, Alvin is travelling eastwards, from Laurens, Iowa to Mt. Zion, Wisconsin. However, some of the long shots of Alvin on his mower in the vast landscape seem, when regarded in the conventional way of showing direction in mainstream narrative film, as if he is going west. Thus, the film embeds Alvin's trajectory in the mythology of the journey towards the promised land from the Western genre and onwards (see framegrab, ibid.: 84). Nochimson concludes in her scrutiny of the geography of the mower's onward journey that:

> [a] close reading of what Lynch does to direction and orientation in space when Alvin is in motion changes what he experiences from a straight line to Zion into a dream of coherence in a landscape in which there is nothing certain. (ibid.: 83–84)

In continuation of what Nochimson calls the film's "tantalizing incompleteness" (ibid.: 63), I would argue, too, that this is Lynch proper. However, my argument relates to the fact that the film is filled with textures of ageing, first and foremost embodied in the face of the protagonist, the old Alvin Straight played by the late Robert Farnsworth, who was 78 years old at the time of shooting. My point is

that the film, besides being read horizontally, along the straight line of dramaturgy, could be read vertically, with a focus on the unorderly relation between age, time and the face.

The Straight Story, which Hoberman (1999) called a "geriatric road movie", is literally a film about the passing of time (the slowing down of time), about the ageing and stubborn Alvin who travels from Iowa to Wisconsin on his lawnmower in order to reconcile with his brother before it is too late. Alvin is an old man, which is pointed out many times. He can only walk with the aid of two canes, his hips are fragile, he has no driver's licence and he has sight problems. At one point he is outpaced by a large group of young bicyclists, whom he meets again in their camp, where he spends the night. Sitting at the campfire with two of the young men, he laments getting old, and one of the men objects that something must be good about getting old. Alvin briefly sketches the troubles of ageing—"I can't imagine anything good about being blind and lame". Here he refers to entering into "deep old age" or what has been called "the fourth age" in ageing studies, an age of ailment and disability, which has often been suppressed in both the media and gerontology studies in favour of descriptions and studies of "the third age" as a period in old age defined by good health, freedom and consumption (Gilleard and Higgs 2000; Twigg 2006). Then another young man asks Alvin what the worst part of being old is, to which Alvin gloomily replies: "The worst part of being old is remembering when you was young."

We do not get to know much about the young Alvin and his life, though. *The Straight Story* is a film about the dysfunctional ageing body and the loss Alvin expresses to the young man. It is a film about the way time has worked on the body. As in *The Elephant Man* , which *The Straight Story* has been read alongside (Chion 2005; Kember 2004; Correm 2011), death is not far away. The courageousness and heroism ascribed to Alvin's travel may not least be because he has crossed the boundary to the fourth age and fiercely tries to avoid it by going on his trip against all odds.

In contrast to *Lost Highway*'s loop structure in which continuous time dissolves, and a man (Fred) can, apparently, transmute into a younger man (Pete), *The Straight Story* has written the passage of time into Alvin's watery eyes and wrinkled features, which constitute a

chaotic landscape, a disparate unit of parts. The passing of time has written its abstract marks in the enigmatic web of crossing lines, furrows and age spots that emerge as an abstract texture of ageing in the many close-ups of Alvin's face and hands. In parallel, there are close-ups of Alvin's rusty mower, which he prepares for the trip in his backyard.

Alvin's face bears the "natural" traces of time's passing, in contrast to *Lost Highway*'s uncanny Mystery Man with his smooth, ageless mask face and a camera attached to one eye as a mechanical prosthesis that can penetrate space and time and record what might not yet have happened. Mystery Man's painted-over face protrudes as a grotesque inorganic surface, which does not reveal any interiority, and which has attached to it the uncanny traces of repression. Alvin's face, by contrast, at once offers a texture of ageing to contemplate and a scenery of wrinkles to explore.

My point about textures of ageing is that they emanate as the result of the working of time on surfaces. However, the evidence of the passing of time on artefacts does not show as the consecutive layering of matter one upon the other, year after year, like the growth ring of a tree. By contrast, Lynch's visual sense of physical objects in a constant process of destabilization or change is more reminiscent of the figure of the palimpsest. Textures of ageing appear as the interlocking, contingent and porous co-presence of layers of corrosion occasioned by the disintegration of metal, wood and concrete—or the changes of the face, the layering of still new wrinkles as time goes by. Literary scholar Sarah Dillon (2005, 2007) defines the palimpsest in this way:

> The palimpsest is an involuted phenomenon where otherwise unrelated texts are involved and entangled, intricately interwoven, interrupting and inhabiting each other. Another word that describes this structure is the neologism "palimpsestuous".[21] (Dillon 2005: 245)

The palimpsest refers to a certain kind of text, whereas the palimpsestuous refers to "the logic and the structure" of the palimpsest (ibid.: 244). In this chapter's discussion on textures of ageing, what is important is *entanglement* and *inhabiting*. One layer cannot be defined

as the “first” or “original”, but layers interlock and boundaries between layers blur.[22] The close-up of the ageing face shows it as a tactile palimpsestuous texture. It also shows the face as a rugged surface, a *map*, albeit a map that is hard to read—just like Hawk said about his old map in *Twin Peaks: The Return* (Episode 11): “[I]t’s a living thing.” Therefore, this pattern on the ageing face does not represent lived life as a straight, continuous road of causes and effects on a linear timeline from child to old man. Evidently, the old face records time. But it constitutes an abstract and chaotic temporal universe. Textures of ageing do not point at a straight story but to an unorderly palimpsestuous process across time.

Alvin’s wrinkled and age-spotted face and hands and his watery eyes at once convey and emphasize the emphatic feelings evoked by the story of this old man’s journey towards reconciliation. The film presents to the viewers some of the pieces of the unique story that the face archives in a not easily decodable manner—but not all of the pieces and not ordered continuously. Even though lived life has left its mark on the ageing face, it is not directly translatable into the events that have constituted a life. So, the repeated images of textures of ageing procured by the close-ups of Alvin’s face correspond on the micro level of the image to what Nochimson argued with respect to narrative and editing. In this straight and simple film there are mysteries and holes on many levels.

Kember (2004) has argued that the close portraits of Alvin’s face at once convey a strong sense of documentary veracity and “an intense signification of interiority” (Kember 2004: 29); likewise, Kember talks about “the transparency of the face” (ibid.: 31). Certainly, the many close-ups of Alvin’s face are concrete and individual, and the signs of ageing establish an authenticity that the smooth face is not capable of doing. Yet, I would argue that the close-ups are not least conveying abstract textures, which do not point at inner meaning, a subjective essence or a truth, but simply at time (passed). The close-up of the ageing face, a whole divided into a multitude of single parts by its criss-crossing lines and furrows, is not transparent but shows the abstract, decontextualized, traces of the many years of lived life. Within this straightforward diegesis, the close-ups of Alvin’s face create autonomous moments (Doane 2003; Jerslev 2018) that make possible a

different experience of time to the one along which the narrative unfolds. As Lawrence Shaffer has rightly pointed out in a *Film Quarterly* article, the face "remains an impenetrable surface for all its 'expressiveness'; the camera does not necessarily get any closer to states of mind by getting closer to the face" (Shaffer 1978: 3). In contrast to the non-mediated face, the mediated face is always at once general (a presentation of a face) and individual (the expressions of one unique person). Hence, the mediated face is never just the privileged expression of subjectivity but remains enigmatic for all its apparent transparency.

The point is that the close-ups show the face as an organic surface that changes as it ages over the course of time. The literature on the close-up of the face in cinema (from Balasz to Aumont, Doane and Deleuze) (see, for example, Jerslev 2014, 2018)[23] hardly discusses the *ageing* face, its inscription of time and its significant characteristic as a texture (of ageing) provided with the diegetic autonomy that the close-up offers (Jerslev 2018). Moreover, I disagree with Joe Kember (2004) on his choice of the term "face ruin". To Kember, the face ruin is the incoherent, fragmented face (like Rose's face in *The Straight Story*), which points at existential anxieties and a troubled sense of selfhood. To me, the face, young or old, is never a ruin. This term would logically assume that a face was finished and complete at some point, and thereafter it dissolved and decayed. However, there is no such thing as a finished face. I do agree that the face is a disordered organism and not least that the old face is characterized by disorder. Yet it is more a disparate unity of fragments or a palimpsest than it is a ruin.

Grayson Cooke suggests that the face is a "repository of time" (2009: 1), but it is also a dynamic repository transformed by time. Cooke argues that images of ageing faces are important points of reference for constituting a collective sense of memory, even for restoring memory. The elderly face archives a life. But just as the archive is an organism in continuous change, the older face archives a life that is at the same time still in the process of becoming. Hence, we might see it as a trace or an index of the passing of time. The texture of ageing cannot be immediately read but it is pointing to the irreversibility of time and functions like what Swedish film scholar Malin Wahlberg, in her discussion about film as trace and index, calls a "presence of absence"

(Wahlberg 2008: 35). Textures of ageing represent time as a convoluted ordering of time passed and time still happening.

Grayson Cooke writes about the face as a kind of phenomenological trace: "The face *records* time simply as a *function* of time, it is an analogue of time" (Cooke 2009: 11—Cooke's italics). This applies beautifully to the images of Alvin's face as a texture of ageing in *The Straight Story*. The story about the old man on his lawnmower may be simpler and temporally more straightforward than is usually the case in Lynch. However, the texture of ageing that shows in the close-ups of Alvin's face radiates a more complex notion of time.

Along the line of the phenomenological and indexical, I end this discussion about Alvin's face as a texture of ageing by suggesting that a sense of "non-diegetic" time embodied by the ageing actor, Robert Farnsworth, who was close to 80 when the film premiered and was cast to appear very much his age, superimposes itself on the fictive, diegetic time. This doubling creates a fissure or another weirdness in this straight film—a blurring of boundaries between fiction and reality, just like so many other thresholds are exceeded, or boundaries are blurred, in Lynch's work.

In *Meta-Morphing*, Vivian Sobchack talked about "temporal value" (2000: 141), which she contrasted with the uncanny timeless digital morph her edited volume scrutinized. The texture of ageing Lynch praises in the quote with which I introduced this chapter, and which I have suggested has marked old Alvin's seemingly naked, unpainted face, is one such example of temporal value. It draws attention to embodied processes of transformation , to temporal duration, to gravity and to mortality. This is the magic in the texture of ageing in Lynch.

Textures of Ageing in *Twin Peaks: The Return*

The Death of Margaret Lanterman

I now turn to *Twin Peaks: The Return* and Lynch's use of a number of the same actors and actresses he used in *Twin Peaks*—who have aged 25 years since Laura, in the last episode of *Twin Peaks*, in the Red Room, said to Dale Cooper the enigmatic words while blinking her left eye and snapping the fingers on her right hand: "I'll see you again in 25 years. Meanwhile …" This return applies, *among others* (among at least 30

roles), to Laura Palmer/Carrie Page (Sheryl Lee), Gordon Cole (David Lynch), Audrey Horne (Sherilyn Fenn), Albert Rosenfield (the late Miguel Ferrer), Dale Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan), the Log Lady (the late Catherine E. Coulson), Denise Bryson (David Duchovny), Shelly Johnson (Mädchen Amick), Bobby Briggs (Dana Ashbrook), James Hurley (James Marshall), Andy Brennan (Harry Goaz), Norma Jennings (Peggy Lipton), Ed Hurley (Everett McGill) and Lucy Moran (Kimmy Robertson).

The casting strategy brings about a temporality which entails the blurring of boundaries between diegetic and non-diegetic time and between character and actor/actress, similarly to what the close-ups of Richard Farnsworth/Alvin Straight brought about in *The Straight Story*. I claimed above that the mediated face is always at once general and specific. Yet, when it comes to audio-visual fiction, the mediated face bears meaning on three levels. First, it is general, belonging to a class of recognizable objects; second, it belongs to a specific actress with a track record within film and media—either a well-known star or a more unknown actress; and third, it is the face of a specific filmic character (a role). In the case of film and TV series, this third aspect of the face is particularly prominent. Most often, a fiction film goes to great lengths to subordinate the second facial appearance to the third: we are invited to empathize with the character and only secondarily should we evaluate the performance of the skilled actress (see Jerslev 2018). However, the close-up always challenges this distinction. This applies in particular to close-ups of the older face, in which it takes on a visual significance of its own.

This merging of character and actress is particularly significant with respect to the character Margaret Lanterman/the Log Lady, played by long-time associate of David Lynch, Catherine E. Coulson, whose appearance had changed significantly since *Twin Peaks* because of her cancer illness and the accompanying cancer treatment. Not only was the Log Lady dying in *Twin Peaks: The Return* (Log Lady appeared in Episodes 1, 2, 10, 11 and 15 and passed away in Episode 15), but that was also the reality for Catherine E. Coulson. Coulson, born in 1943, died in late September 2015, just a few weeks after the production of *Twin Peaks: The Return* took off. Because the biographical person Catherine E. Coulson is in a sense embedded in the diegesis and merged with Margaret Lanterman, a strong sense of indexicality is conveyed to

Margaret Lanterman/Catherine Coulson's dying body. So here too we have a significant—emotionally moving—example of the blurring of boundaries: between on-screen and off-screen, diegetic and non-diegetic realities and screen temporality and real life temporality.

The Log Lady, aka Margaret Lanterman/Catherine E. Coulson, is in all five episodes talking to Hawk on the telephone. She is also framed in the same way: she sits in a chair, turned towards the camera in medium close-up, and has the log in her arm in the familiar way. Thus, her position reminds us of her position in the introductory monologues Lynch made to each episode of *Twin Peaks* when it was aired in syndication.[24] In the *Twin Peaks: The Return* scenes, there is a cut to close-ups when she puts down the receiver at significant points in her discussion with Hawk, as if the image is opening up towards the viewer and allows us to be with her, too, for a last farewell. The room is rather dark. Light comes from beneath a red lamp shade and another light source shines on her partly naked scalp. Margaret/Coulson is wearing a red sweater and red glasses and her lips are painted a discreet red. She is very thin. Her voice is fragile, and she uses a nasal cannula. Moreover, her hair is extremely thin and short, probably a side effect from her chemo treatment.

In all five scenes she is talking to Hawk on her landline telephone—one of the outdated "sonic technologies" (Goddard 2016) still prevalent in the town of Twin Peaks, not least in the police station (by contrast, Hawk uses a cellphone when he communicates with Margaret from the woods in Episode 2). What we witness in these scenes, and particularly in the last scene in Episode 15, which starts with Margaret/Coulson telling Hawk "I'm dying", is the ending of the life of a well-known, beloved fictional character whose recognizable mysterious messages are heard again after 25 years. Thus, in the first episode her frail voice tells Hawk: "My log has a message to you. Something is missing and you have to find it. It has to do with special agent Dale Cooper. The way you will find it has something to do with your heritage. This is the message from the log." But we cannot but also see and hear the ageing actress, whose body and biography (and our knowledge about her advanced illness) superimpose themselves on the character. The imaginary doubling of the image and the blurring of boundaries between fact and fiction also make us recollect the younger Coulson/Lanterman in *Twin*

Peaks; a memory that contributes an additional layer to this texture of ageing.

Non-diegetic time layers upon diegetic time and creates an emotional in-between space in which linear time disintegrates and is replaced by an affective now, the now of Margaret's imminent death. So, when Lanterman, utterly sad, tells Hawk in Episode 15, "My log is getting golden. The wind is moaning. I'm dying. Good night, Hawk", this farewell is not only Margaret Lanterman's mournful goodbye to her good friend and soulmate, but also Coulson's sad goodbye to the audience, which, for its part, knows that this is the last encounter.

The episode's credits end with the sentence: "In memory of Margaret Lanterman." The final scene with Margaret Lanterman/the Log Lady is beautifully framed by two shots of Margaret's house. The scene constitutes a singular fragment within the larger puzzle of the episode, which is also the one containing the happy ending of Ed and Norma's story, Bad Cooper's encounter with Jeffrey's reincarnation, the disintegration of the convenience store[25] and the electrification of Dougie, which transforms him (back?) into special agent Dale Cooper.

The end of the scene with Hawk and Margaret's final phone conversation, which starts with a long shot of Margaret's house with lights coming from the windows in the dark, acquires the significance of a memorial. The fragment builds a space of mourning for the audience, who as a collective (of fans) are gathered to pay their last respects and to mourn a character who has just passed away. The sequence becomes even more emotional because, besides being an emotionally saturated site for saying goodbye to the Log Lady/Margaret Lanterman in the diegetic present, it is also a eulogy in commemoration of Catherine Coulson. When Episode 15 was broadcast on Showtime on August 20, Catherine Coulson had been dead for almost two years. The sequence therefore took the form of what Elizabeth Cowie has called a "work of memorializing" (2011: 156) and performs an emotional enactment of the past in the present. Besides being a memorial, the fragment thus also takes the form of a memory site (Edensor 2005), a space of mourning and remembering in honour of both the Log Lady/Margaret Lanterman and Catherine Coulson. Even more importantly, it becomes a sacred space because it makes room for what is so difficult and damaging for many of the characters in the *Twin Peaks* universe, that is,

remembering. The sequence creates a space for us to remember the Log Lady when she was younger and pay homage to her sibyl-like mysterious predictions of the future, which she passed on from her log right to her death.

Margaret's last telephone conversation with Hawk ends with Hawk saying in a subdued voice, "Good night, Margaret," while the camera slowly moves a bit closer to him sitting behind his desk at the police station. He hears Margaret disconnect and then he disconnects himself while saying "Goodbye, Margaret" and slowly turning his head followed by a shot of a white crescent disappearing behind dark clouds in the dark sky. The next scene takes place in the meeting room at the police station, where Hawk informs Truman, Bobby, Andy and Lucy of Margaret's death. After Hawk has said the words, sad and gentle music tones start, and they continue as we see Truman take off his hat and Hawk, framed in a medium close-up, bow his head respectfully. After this, the enunciative level takes over. The camera travels over the dark treetops, which merge with a long shot of the Log Lady's house similar to the opening shot of the sequence.

Margaret's house stands in the dark with lights coming from two windows. The lights fade out and the camera stays for a short while on the house, which stands as a sombre silhouette in the dark. Finally, the screen turns completely black and the solemn string-like synthesizer music, which has sounded since Hawk brought the announcement to his colleagues, stops.

The repetition of the shot of the house encloses the sequence as a sacred space of mourning and a memorial within the 15th episode of *Twin Peaks: The Return*. So present and past coalesce powerfully. The Log Lady dies but Catherine Coulson has already been dead for some months. This sequence in the TV series can thus be characterized as at once a site-specific object, a memorial and a place of mourning, commemoration. The very short shots of the woods and the house function as a diegetically embedded closure, the ending of the life of a character, as the episode's concluding line emphasizes. It also releases the sequence from the narrative and attaches to it an intense emotional atmosphere. The memorial blurs boundaries between the fictional and the real, between the character and the actor, between faces and voices of different times. It creates a "present-tense speaking about the past in

the remembering", to borrow Cowie's words (2011: 156). As a filmic memorial and a site-specific commemoration, it comes into being through the active act of viewing. Hence the time of the Margaret Lanterman memorial is also the time of the memorializing of Coulson.

Lynch has on several occasions in interviews in relation to *Twin Peaks: The Return* (but also before) repeated that he had more to tell and "a thing isn't finished till it's finished. And one day it's finished" (Wood and Sheffield 2009; see also, for example, Nieland 2012: 168—I return to this important remark in Chap. 5). A tribute had been paid to Coulson by the end of the first episode. Here in Episode 15, the images and the switching off of the lights in Margaret Lanterman's house construct a site-specific memorial to the mourning of the character, after the shock of encountering Coulson/Lanterman marked by disease across the vast time ellipsis of 25 years. By the end of Episode 15, the story of the Log Lady had finished. Coulson had also been laid to rest. She was memorialized through one of Lynch's favourite aesthetics: the texture of ageing.[26]

I end this section by referring to one more example of the blurring of boundaries between fiction and reality that relates to actor Miguel Ferrer, who died in January 2017. In Episode 12 of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Rosenfield (Ferrer) and Cole (Lynch) meet in Cole's room to discuss a mysterious series of text messages from and to "Diane". There is a comic exchange between the two men because Cole mishears what Rosenfield is saying. But then they pause for a remarkably long time. The two men look at each other in silence while the camera focuses on them alternately. After approximately 20 seconds, Cole puts his arm on Albert's shoulder and says, "Albert, sometimes I really worry about you", without Albert responding. Or is it David Lynch talking to his long-time acquaintance Miguel Ferrer, who was ill with cancer at the time of the making of the scene? At any rate, the scene conveys a sense of quiet intimacy between the two men not otherwise seen in the series.

The Ghost of Laura Palmer in *Twin Peaks: The Return*

The other example I want to bring to light is the functioning of the prom photograph of a smiling Laura Palmer in a strapless dress in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, so well known from *Twin Peaks*, in which the end credits in each episode rolled on top of the photograph. In *Twin Peaks*

the photograph functioned as a constant reminder of the meaningless killing of a beautiful young girl, but also more and more as the epitome of small-town mendacity and secrecy. In *Twin Peaks: The Return* it seems to haunt some of the characters and even the screen itself. The photograph's stereotypical portraiture represents the diametrical opposite to the aesthetic form I call texture of ageing. The photograph's frozen flat glamour contains no trace of the magic emanating from the way surfaces transform in unpredictable ways over time. Laura's ghostly presence in *Twin Peaks: The Return* is attributed to her face forever arrested in the same youthful features, which bear no traces of her life, let alone of her dying.

The photo grows uncannily towards the viewer in the introduction to every episode except for the first. The credit sequences open with a foggy screen, to the right of which some treetops appear. A shining circle moves unevenly across the screen and then Laura's image is superimposed dimly on the clouds in ultra-close-up. As the face floats even closer towards the camera, it becomes more and more blurred, until it dissolves and the camera tracks slowly over the woods from above the clouds.

The first episode of *Twin Peaks: The Return* starts with the camera moving frenetically over the zig-zag floor and across the red curtain in the Red Room. Then the end of Episode 29 of *Twin Peaks* is repeated: a young Laura Palmer tells Cooper (in the characteristic reverse speech of the Red Room): "I'll see you again in 25 years. Meanwhile …." The screen goes black and the intro sequence starts, but for once without the Laura Palmer image superimposed. A shot over the foggy woods dissolves into a long shot of an old factory building with a high chimney, similar to the shot of a larger factory complex in the opening sequences to *Twin Peaks*. However, there is no smoke coming from the chimney and the building seems deserted and somewhat ruinous in the dim air, recalling Lynch's photographs of deserted factories. A dissolve follows to a deserted hallway in the school, and another dissolve to a girl in a school uniform who runs across the schoolyard, her hands across her face, while the camera follows her from behind a window (just like in the *Twin Peaks* pilot). There is one more dissolve to a vitrine with the school's sports trophies of different kinds. The prom queen photo of Laura is placed exactly in the middle of the vitrine, looming a bit larger

than the other photos. Finally, there is a dissolve and zoom-in to an ultra-close-up of the large photo of Laura (just like in the *Twin Peaks* pilot after the principal has announced the death of Laura to the students). The fetichized placement of the photograph constitutes Laura as the quintessential school trophy. However, the ultra-close-up is also a testimony to the small-town position she fought to escape (Hallam 2018)—in vain. The opening of *Twin Peaks: The Return* has thus established the ghost-like character of Laura Palmer with a vengeance and *Twin Peaks: The Return* can begin: the well-known intro bass and piano chords sound, and the brown and green title letters appear.

Sherif Frank Truman, Harry S. Truman's brother, at one point in Episode 14 calls Gordon Cole and tells him that Hawk has found "missing pages from a certain Laura Palmer's diary". The murder of Laura Palmer was solved in *Twin Peaks* and Frank is not part of that story. To him, Laura Palmer is "a *certain* Laura Palmer", whereas she seems to other Twin Peaks inhabitants such as Bobby, Gordon Cole and not least Dale Cooper to be an obsession and a ghost that haunts them 25 years after she was murdered. Hence, even in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Twin Peaks is not a place but a state of mind, as Georg Seesslen (2005) puts it.

A powerful enactment of the photo's uncanny presence takes place in Episode 17 in Sarah Palmer's home . Sarah Palmer participates in six episodes in *Twin Peaks: The Return*. Two of the episodes open with a medium-long shot of the Palmer residence taken from a bit below, which makes it appear somewhat threatening. Thus, it feels as if the camera has remembered what happened there 25 years ago. In three of the episodes we see Sarah in her sitting room almost from the same angle, watching TV, drinking and smoking. The room is extremely messy and her ashtray is overfilled with fag ends. Sarah is apparently even more beside herself than in *Twin Peaks*. In one episode she is looking almost hypnotized on the TV screen as some predators are killing and eating a buffalo. In another episode the screen repeats the same short segment of a boxing match and a few sentences by the commentator over and over again. Most significantly, Sarah is described as monstrously beside herself in Episode 14 when she opens her face, just like Laura does in the first episode. After that she performs a

deadly attack on a man in a bar who has offended her, like she was one of the predators she had been watching on TV.

The framing of her sitting room in Episode 17 differs a little from the other episodes. The extended long shot is taken slightly from above and the camera is placed a little more to the left, so that an overfilled ashtray and the iconic photo of Laura in its golden frame are visible in the left side of the frame. On the soundtrack, besides a hollow factory noise, we hear moaning, which sounds as if it is coming from a person in absolute agony. After a while, in which nothing happens in the room, Sarah enters and snatches the gold-framed photo of Laura. She hurls it to the floor with a furious gesture and a groan and starts to violently attack the protective glass with an empty bottle. The off-screen moans return, and on top of this noise is the sound of high repetitive cracks as if coming from a large factory pressure piston. The camera slowly moves towards the photograph, which, despite Sarah's repetitive and violent attacks on it, remains remarkably untouched. It is as if the photograph itself is cursed and the mother, Sarah, is forever uncannily caught in the lie, which the photo at once hides and discloses. This might also explain the violence in the bar scene, the man's nasty and offensive advances notwithstanding. The eruptive revelation of her destructive inner agony can thus be seem as her fight against remembering and the return of the repressed (I return to the uncanny in Chap. 7). The sound contributes to filling the room with a heavily disturbed affective atmosphere. It sounds as if the sorrow, the tension, the anger and the bad conscience of the past 25 years have invaded every bit of the room.

The uncanny saccharine photograph of the forever young, flawless and smiling homecoming queen seems to pop up in strange places in Twin Peaks, even at the police station. Because Laura's face contains no trace of the passing of time and bears no signs of remembrance, but merely represents an iconic idea of the young, beautiful American girl, Lynch's organic matter "painted over", it is uncannily devoid of magic. It is a reminder of death but also of being robbed of the inability to age. C. Lee Harrington quotes Mike Featherstone and Mike Hepworth in claiming that "[e]very image of a human being is effectively an image of aging" (Harrington 2016: 33). The ordinary photograph of Laura Palmer is indeed a representation of a being turned inhuman by the act

of photographing and the concomitant embalming of time, to quote André Bazin. Bazin says of family portraits that they show "the disturbing presence of lives halted at a set moment of their duration, freed from their destiny" (Bazin 2005 [1967]: 14). Yet, photographs never free the portrayed people from their destiny. Just as a photographed portrait bears the traces of the past, it inevitably inscribes the future that it cannot itself present. This is the uncanny presence in the photo of Laura Palmer.

Because the photograph also represents the abuse and assaults on Laura painted over, it never disappears. It returns and keeps haunting Twin Peaks. Michael Ewins (2018) argues in his reflections on *Twin Peaks: The Return* that in Lynch, particularly the body—and in particular Laura Palmer's body—"carries the scars and traumas of time". However, the freezing of time in the objectified photograph of Laura is even more traumatizing precisely because it lacks the inscription of time.

Maybe in the final episode of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, the paint is peeled off the photograph of the young Laura Palmer in a weird reverse move and reveals an older Laura Palmer—in another world? A Laura Palmer double—or tulpa? Carrie Page? But—surely—the actress Sheryl Lee 25 years older. Even though the middle-aged Carrie Page (played by Sheryl Lee), whom Cooper drives to Twin Peaks, may neither be a future Laura Palmer nor the Laura Palmer that once was, Carrie Page and the Laura Palmer of *Twin Peaks* are played by the same actress. A *Hollywood Reporter* article wrote about the final scene in *Twin Peaks: The Return* that "Cooper and a woman named Carrie Page, who looks exactly like Laura Palmer, [are] standing outside of the Palmer residence in the middle of the darkened streets of Twin Peaks" (Wigler 2017). My point is, though, that the middle-aged woman with the name Carrie Page, whom Dale Cooper picked up in Odessa, Texas and who, because she has a corpse sitting in a chair in her living room, went along with this man who claims to know her as Laura Palmer, does not look at all like the young and smiling Laura Palmer whose portrait intrudes upon us throughout the series. We will probably never know who she is or what makes Carrie Page scream so desperately at the end, after she has heard the faint calling for Laura from the house—ghostly

reminiscent of the sound of Sarah Palmer calling to wake Laura up on the morning after she had been killed (Hallam 2018).

At Bob's request, because he couldn't conquer Laura, she was killed by her father as Lindsay Hallam puts it (2018). But maybe we are somewhere and sometime long *before* this happened. The middle-aged woman who opens the door to Cooper and Carrie Page calls herself Mrs Tremond. But Mrs Tremond was a really old woman in *Twin Peaks*—or maybe it is safer to say that there was a very old woman named Mrs Tremond in *Twin Peaks* who lived together with her grandson. What is certain, though, is that we are definitely in the company of two characters embodied by an actor and an actress who have aged since the shooting of *Twin Peaks*. Therefore, it is safe to say that in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, time ends up being a maelstrom in which different temporalities clash. Past and present merge into a high-tension network, in which some of the characters can move around, either at will or involuntarily and confused.

Cooper and Carrie leave the door to what seems to be the "Palmer residence" silent and somewhat paralysed. They walk away from the house side by side with their backs turned to the camera in a lengthy shot and then they turn around and look bewildered up towards the house. Cooper takes a couple of hesitant steps towards it again, and while lifting his right arm a bit as if walking towards a transparent veil he intends to pull aside he asks, "What year is this?" Cooper seems to be in many different times at once, a true "transitional figure" (Halskov 2015: 109). However, he carries with him his body and its signs of ageing, no matter what the place and time.

Cooper could just as well have asked, "What *place* is this?" The Palmer residence, which looms slightly above them, looks familiar and yet it is not. Cooper's imperceptible gesture with his right hand and the question indicate that he realizes at this point that he is standing in an unfamiliar space on the threshold between worlds, neither here nor there, neither then nor now. Moreover, he may begin to realize that the family with which he seems to want to reunite "Laura" is non-existent, just like the "home" he told "Laura" they should return to when he met her in the woods is not a home but a crime scene. The good Cooper got it all wrong. Page, on the other hand, may have seen or heard something perhaps long forgotten that returns to haunt her. Anyway, the series

ends with her screaming the same way Laura Palmer screamed violently in the Red Room in the *Twin Peaks* ending .

The only certain thing is that we finally reunite with Sheryl Lee firmly grounded in her 25-years-older body, who plays a bewildered waitress in a diner in some dusty small town who may have killed a man, whose corpse sits in a chair in her shabby house. Therefore, the series leaves us not only in some undefinable collapsed time, but also—again—on a weird threshold. On the one hand, there is a fictional space, in which Laura Palmer in all probability is dead but her portrait, frozen in time, lives on and haunts the living with its forever young saccharine smile. On the other hand, there is a space in which time is embodied and phenomenological. Here, time's passing leaves its traces as textures of ageing—just like we see the traces of time passed on Sheryl Lee's face when compared with her embodiment of the young Laura Palmer.

"Meanwhile"

Twin Peaks: The Return starts almost like *Twin Peaks* ended. In the Red Room, Laura greets agent Cooper, blinks her left eye, snaps her right-hand fingers and says: "I'll see you in 25 years." After a short pause she adds "Meanwhile!" while making a strange gesture with her arms. This opening to *Twin Peaks: The Return* is followed by the intro sequence. In the *Twin Peaks* ending Laura returns a few minutes later and repeats "meanwhile", but apparently, in the meantime she has been possessed by Bob. Her eyes are monstrously white, and she screams incessantly in stroboscopic flashes of dark and light, which, as Lindsay Hallam (2018: 91) suggests metaphorizes the tensions between dark and light in Lynch's universe, and the blurring of boundaries between the two forces. This second appearance of the now possessed Laura suggests that "meanwhile", the time in between, has been a time of utter violence. The exclamation thus implies an exclamation mark whereas "meanwhile" is more likely uttered as a question in the first part of the scene.

As an adverb, "meanwhile" refers to time in two different ways, according to, for example, the Merriam-Webster dictionary. It denotes both "during the intervening time" and "at the same time". "Meanwhile" implies a demarcated span of time between two temporal poles. Therefore "meanwhile" promises a time that will come to an end. But

“meanwhile” also implies simultaneity in time and it attaches to time a sense of place and occurrence: “meanwhile—at the same time, somewhere else”. Therefore, “meanwhile” implies at once temporal extension and temporal synchronization. “Meanwhile” designates a temporality that is at once with and without demarcations.

The little word addressed twice at Cooper in the Red Room in the final episode of *Twin Peaks* suggests that “meanwhile” can be fatal. But the temporal demarcation—“25 years”—diffuses time to a degree that linearity disintegrates into a chaotic simultaneity because there are no spaces and narratives to shape it. Narratively, structured by this time void, the two *Twin Peaks* series at once remind us of and oppose the soap genre’s temporality (Harrington 2016). They differ fundamentally from the soap’s meticulously detailed unfolding of narrated time. On the other hand, they pay tribute, although much more radically, to the soap’s simultaneous deconstruction of continuous time narration in order to construct “alternate temporal structures, and thus by implication, alternate realities of age and aging” (Harrington 2016: 37).

In *Twin Peaks: The Return* the two meanings attached to “meanwhile” are suggestive of the blurring of boundaries in the series. On the one hand, there is no demarcated period of time—which the ending makes fully clear. The temporality of the intervening time is most meaningful in relation to the visible ageing of the actors and actresses. On the other hand, the series’ lack of narrative coherence and abundance of occurrences taking place at the same time make any easily grasped sense of continuous time disappear. The series leaves us with what Russell West-Pavlov in his book *Temporalities* has called “multiple, interwoven, immanent temporalities inhabiting entities of many types” (2012: 12). A temporality that cannot but create confusion.

When Lynch uses the same actors, including himself, for his *Twin Peaks* projects across a timespan of two and a half decades, he cherishes the ageing process and the recording of time left as abstract traces of ageing on the body. In highlighting processes of ageing, David Lynch manages to create a textured in-between space, in which the diegetic and the extra-diegetic merge and in which boundaries between fiction and reality are blurred.

To return to Grayson Cooke’s provocative question to contemporary culture about what is so wrong with time, which I referred to at the

beginning of this chapter, as regards David Lynch's textures of ageing, the answer would be "nothing". On the contrary, the imprint of the passing of time on the face and the body is magic. What is crucial to the understanding of time and textures of ageing, be they imprinted on the ageing face or material objects, is the "meanwhile". Textures of ageing are temporal extensions without linearity, discontinuous and blurred traces of time passing, palimpsestuous incoherences.

In concluding this chapter's discussion on the contradictory temporalities and the dissolution of spatial demarcations in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, I return to Foucault's reflections on the societal spaces he calls "heterotopias" and overall understands as "counter-sites".

To Foucault, heterotopias are, in contrast to utopias, real spaces. They are constituted as radically different societal spaces, at the same time as they are marked by the governing patterns to which they are opposed. Heterotopias are at once "mythic and real contestation of the space in which we live" (1986 [1967]: 24).

In Foucault's "heterology", six principles constitute heterotopias. First, he claims that, historically, what he calls "crisis heterotopias" consisted of a range of different and incompatible spaces. They were sacred—liminal—spaces reserved for people in a particular condition (for example, the young in a period of transition, or the elderly), but they were replaced by "heterotopias of deviation", which he exemplifies with the prison, the psychiatric hospital and the retirement home. Second, heterotopic spaces may be the same over time, like the cemetery, but historically their societal function may change. Third, a heterotopia may consist of several spaces that are otherwise incompatible (Foucault uses the garden as his example, a small world that may include the whole world). Fourth, a particular construction of time often accompanies a particular heterotopia (the museum defined by the indefinite accumulation of time or the event ("festive") characterized by its defined temporality). Foucault's fifth principle is that, in accordance with the dialectic of inside and outside, difference and similarity, heterotopic spaces are at once open and closed, isolated and penetrable. Finally, the sixth principle is the heterotopian mirror function. A heterotopia may either function as holding a mirror of illusion (or imagination) to all other spaces, or it can be a compensation, the heterotopia of perfection. Foucault regards the ship

as “the heterotopia par excellence”, a space without place, a hierarchically ordered system mirroring the power structures of society and yet also an uncanny system without a “home”, closed in on itself.[27]

In continuation of Foucault’s reflections, *Twin Peaks: The Return* could be seen as constituting a disparate collection of heterotopic sites, weird, uncanny sites that are radically outside (no matter whether it is the Red Room, the Road House or homes like Sarah Palmer’s claustrophobic house or the Jones’s house in the kitschy suburb) (cf. Hawkes 2019).[28] The many incompatible spaces in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, enfolded in diverse temporalities and in principle held together by the 18 one-hour episode TV format, may be regarded as inverted and contested representations of worlds of social being. They are slices of spatial and temporal otherness, and simultaneously anchored in worldliness and a profoundly distorted familiarity.

In Foucault’s somewhat confusing use of the terms “space”, “place” and “site”, space “takes for us the form of relations among sites” (1986 [1967]: 23) and sites designate “relations of proximity between points or elements” (ibid.). Hence, to Foucault, heterotopias are not outside some established order: “[T]he space in which we live,” he says, is in itself “a heterogeneous space.” *Twin Peaks: The Return* constitutes in a radical way this heterogeneity, in which we live. It could be regarded as a distorted mirror image—a completely dysfunctional world in which peace, quiet and happiness is an exception. The series’ abundance of heterotopian spaces constitutes altogether an at once uncanny and dizzying atmosphere and a world that is absolutely different and recognizable at one and the same time.

Twin Peaks: The Return is the latest example of the radical dissolution of continuous time in Lynch’s works. It is a bold example of how he refuses narrative order and coherence, which, despite Jason Mittell’s (2015) discussion on “complex TV”, characterizes most popular audio-visual fiction. This is one important asset of Lynch’s work. What is interesting, though, as I have argued in this chapter, is that there is also an occupation with time as duration running through his work, not as continuous and coherent but as disorderly processes of ageing. I have been occupied with examples of what I have called *textures of ageing* , the way David Lynch could be said to pay homage to

ageing processes and the beauty in ageing. He photographs these processes and he lingers on the ageing face. Moreover, in *Twin Peaks: The Return* he invites us to look at bodies many of us remember well aged 25 years and think about youth and ageing, about bodily changes and about time passing. Lynch also invites us to look at himself having aged. Finally, there are a few short parts of the series that in a touchingly private way acknowledge that 25 years is a long time, and which is not only about ageing but also about dying.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_4

4. David Lynch and the Digital

Anne Jerslev[1] ✉
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

✉ **Anne Jerslev**
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

I loved my Sony PD 150. It's not good quality, but it's the quality INLAND EMPIRE lives in. I feel like I'll never shoot anything on film again. It's not that I don't love film, though. Celluloid is like analog in sound. As good as it is, digital seems brittle compared with analog, which is thick and pure and has a smooth power. It's like the difference between oil paint and acrylic paint. Oil is heavier and I always want to go with the heavy one, but there are things you can do with acrylic that you can't do with oil
—Lynch in Lynch and McKenna (2019: 435)

I have published about *Inland Empire* and the *Interview Project* earlier. This chapter includes a substantial rewriting of my *Inland Empire* article published in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture* (Jerslev 2010). As for the *Interview Project*, I published a discussion on the site as part of a chapter called "David Lynch Between Analogue and Digital: *Lost Highway*, *The Straight Story* and the *Interview Project* " (Jerslev 2014). This part is also substantially rewritten in this chapter.

"Digital is Here"

David Lynch stated during his discussion with Chris Rodley about *Lost Highway* that he hates digital equipment: "I personally hate Avid. I hate

the image, I hate the TV screen, and I hate being at such a remove. You don't ever *feel* the film" (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 237—italics in original). With regard to the construction of the sequence in *Lost Highway* where Fred transforms into Pete, Lynch explained:

> Morphing and Computer Generated Imaging and all this stuff is like the Avid to me now. Everybody and his little brother is doing it. It's super-expensive, it's completely time-consuming and it's the kind of thing that I'm not sure how much you can really see before you're locked into accepting the final product … I wanted to find a different way. Actually, there are a lot of elements in that transformation, but they're all organic: in the camera.
>
> I did this thing for Michael Jackson, a computer-generated thirty-second teaser trailer for the album *Dangerous*. It had its own look, which was OK, but it didn't look like film. So when a CGI sequence comes back and is cut into your feature film, how is it going to look? Is it going to look like plastic next to beautiful wood? I don't know. (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 238)

By the late 1990s Lynch was, in contrast to many others, pessimistic regarding new digital technology. However, since this description of the making of the transformation in the camera by means of one of his favourite words, "organic", Lynch has enthusiastically surrendered to digital film. Not least, he realized that digital film could produce the same textured surfaces and sense of duration and organic transformation as can analogue film. Almost 10 years after the Rodley interview, Lynch announced in interviews and in his book of vignettes, *Catching the Big Fish* , that "working with film is so cumbersome" (Lynch 2006: 150), and he concluded, "I'm through with film as a medium. For me, film is dead […] I'm shooting in digital video and I love it" (ibid.: 149). Accordingly, *Inland Empire* is shot on Sony's PD 150, which provides the image surface with a lower quality than HD video.[1]

"Digital is here," Lynch stated (Lynch 2006: 156), and since then he has explored the aesthetic and communicative affordances of digital technology and platforms. In this chapter, I discuss two examples of Lynch's use of digital technology. The chapter consists of two parts, which approach Lynch and the digital in different ways. In the first part,

I engage with the Internet-based, interactive documentary (i-doc) project *Interview Project*.[2] From June 2009 to May 2010, a new short (3–5 minute) documentary portrait was posted on the *Interview Project* website every third day until the final 121st episode, alongside photographs, written text and graphics (a road map). Lynch's son Austin Lynch was in charge of the project. He directed the documentary portraits together with Jason S, who was involved as a producer and director of photography on the documentary *Lynch (One)* (2007) about the production of *Inland Empire* . However, the website was hosted by David Lynch, who also provided the site's welcome message and a very short introduction to each documentary. All introductions were filmed in Lynch's studio. The website received two Webby Awards in 2010.[3]

In the second part of the chapter, I discuss *Inland Empire* (2006), Lynch's first and, so far, only film shot and edited entirely using digital equipment. It is his longest—and most fragmentary—film to date, a truly Lynchian example of what Holly Willis (2005: 4) sees as the explosion of "frames within frames" in contemporary digital film culture. In this part of the chapter, I argue that *Inland Empire* offers a view of the contemporary media-saturated "post-cinematic" condition (Friedberg 2006; Shaviro 2007; Rodowick 2007; Shane and Leyda 2016). It presents a world of screens characterized by the layered coexistence of a multitude of different spaces. In this post-cinematic condition, which has renounced "the frontality of the image" (Ross 2008: 10), boundaries between past and present and between different levels and kinds of mediation are blurred and the viewers have no choice but to adjust to ever-new screened points of view. I thus understand the film as a meditation on the current media world as a precarious condition, in which subjectivity is unstable and (mediated) vision is either blurred or lacks definite boundaries.

The *Interview Project* , which I discuss in the first part of the chapter, is a whole different endeavour. Yet, the website contributes to the same discussion about digital media culture and the forming of contemporary society, given that it responds to the changed condition of (documentary) film production, distribution and reception. The *Interview Project* is equally an example of the post-cinematic, given Richard Grusin's (2016) use of the term to designate "the emergence of multiply networked, distributed forms of cinematic production and

exhibition" (Grusin 2016: 66). So, whereas *Inland Empire* persistently blurs boundaries between screens and levels of "reality", the *Interview Project* blurs boundaries between media and creates what I in the following will call an "intermedia documentary".

The discussion on the *Interview Project* follows upon the preceding chapter's reflections on Lynch's occupation with textures and the transformation of surfaces brought about by time. The section discusses strategies for creating what Mary Ann Doane calls indexical "assurances of the real" (2002: 140), that is, how the intermedia documentary uses a range of references to indexicality, to contingency and chance happenings, and to temporality in order to make a claim to a documentary real. Hence, this section continues the discussion on the Lynch *oeuvre*'s meditation on time, which I started in the previous chapter.

The *Interview Project* is characterized as a "road trip" by Lynch himself and the website archives the result of the trip: a large quantity of filmed and photographed encounters with people edited down to more than a hundred small portraits. But it can also be regarded as an exercise in ways to aesthetically construct a sense of time passing, of time passed, and of time's working on organic and inorganic materials in a digital genre, the website, which is characterized by the fleeting and a temporality of constant updating.

Overall, the *Interview Project* mixes two temporalities. One is the temporality of "quick change" (Sobchack 2000), which glues to the website as a digital medium. The other is the temporality that sticks to film and photography as these are traditionally understood as time-based analogue media. Lynch's initial rejection of digital technology[4] was based on his distinction between the tangible analogue material and the inorganic and hidden digital codes—corresponding with his distinction between the feeling of (auteurial) control and the remote and uncontrollable affordances of the digital. As a kind of mediation between the two views, I discuss below what I call *performances of indexicality* on the site. I am not interested in discussing how the materiality of analogue film makes itself felt in the digital medium (for this discussion see Jerslev 2014). I look into how the affordances of the website may be used for procuring a sense of an "organic" unfolding of time.

Interview Project—An i-doc

Since December 2001, Lynch has hosted a website (www.davidlynch.com), which started out as subscription (or member) based, and on which he, among other things, uploaded a range of his shorter experimental works (for example, the famous *Rabbit* shorts (excerpts of which are pasted into *Inland Empire*), the *Dumbland* animated shorts and different film experiments like, for example, *The Darkened Room* , *Boat* and the *Intervalometer Experiments*).[5] Moreover, he posted a daily weather report on the site by looking out of a high-lying window in his studio. The latter was continued in 2020 as "David Lynch's Weather Report" (to which I return in the concluding chapter) on Lynch's very active YouTube channel David Lynch Theater, which launched in May 2020. It replaced the website activity and made New Musical Express's Mark Beaumont (2020) call him "cinema's biggest lockdown hero". On the YouTube site Lynch has also continuously uploaded a series of short documentaries called "What is David working on today?" (always woodwork), the funny and weird series "Today's Number is", in which he draws a white ball from a jar of balls and shows the number close up to the camera, "David Lynch Theater Presents: Short Films" (experimental shorts like *Fire (Pozar)* (2020, originally made in 2015), *Absurda /Scissors* (2007—first shown as *Absurda* at the Cannes Film Festival), *The Adventures of Alan R* (2020), *The 3 Rs* (2011, originally made for the Venice film festival) and the *Rabbits* series (2002). He also answers questions from viewers on the channel (in continuation of what he did on david.lynch.com).[6]

At the time of writing this book, www.davidlynch.com is primarily used for promoting Lynch's diverse music experiments and selling vinyl records. However, earlier on, as Mactaggart observes (2010: 14), the website was used for digital experiments, some of which might end up in future films one way or another (tasks like that are now taken over by the YouTube channel).

Lynch's love for the website was expressed like this in 2006:

> [G]oing onto the web was so good for me [...] Websites are places where we can all go and, although perhaps no one will see it, at least put out our work, whether it's high-quality still and

> moving images or sound and music. I can create finesse and post these short works, and it's a beautiful thing. (Thill 2007)

Lynch is not only praising the digital but also the Internet in this quote, hence it is no small wonder that he is hosting and introducing the documentaries on the *Interview Project*. For example, he says on the "DL.com Member Questions" entry on the *Dynamic : 01* DVD about "the digital world" that

> one thing leads to another. Where the attention is—that becomes lively. And it's like you open a little door and the ideas flow. If you do anything, all things start coming from that doing. And with the digital world… In the old days people didn't—couldn't experiment the same way […] Now it's so user-friendly to set up something and then ideas start falling and, so, *the Internet is a home for those*. The digital technology is a way to go and it marries so great, greatly, to the Internet and it starts things going that can lead to other things. So, it's the best sort of world happening right now (my italics).[7]

When the *Interview Project* was launched, it could be accessed (without a password) from Lynch's website.[8] The *Interview Project* website hosts these altogether 121 documentary portraits, each of which is edited down from one or two hours of conversation to 3–5 minutes. All interview persons are randomly chosen by Austin Lynch and his team, people they met accidentally on their road trip across the USA. The documentaries are conceived for the web as much as they derive from documentary film-making traditions (Hight 2008). They thus adhere to forms that the Internet has created such as brevity, seriality, sequentiality and interactivity (Birchall 2009: 282).

Each sequence is *short*. The project has a *serialized* format. It consists of separate episodes and you must click on each episode individually in order to play it. The films are *sequentialized*. Episodes may be watched in a random order or sorted by episode, name or location. Finally, the site invites specific forms of *interactivity*. The order of watching the portraits and the choice of how to access the films are optional (from the "all episodes" link on the frontpage top menu, by

clicking on one of the images (Illustration 4.1) or by clicking on the small round face icons on the site's map of the roadtrip). Moreover, each portrait (from Episode 48 onwards) had a commentary field, which could be accessed from a link underneath the written description of the person portrayed. In addition, the site could be followed on Facebook and Twitter.

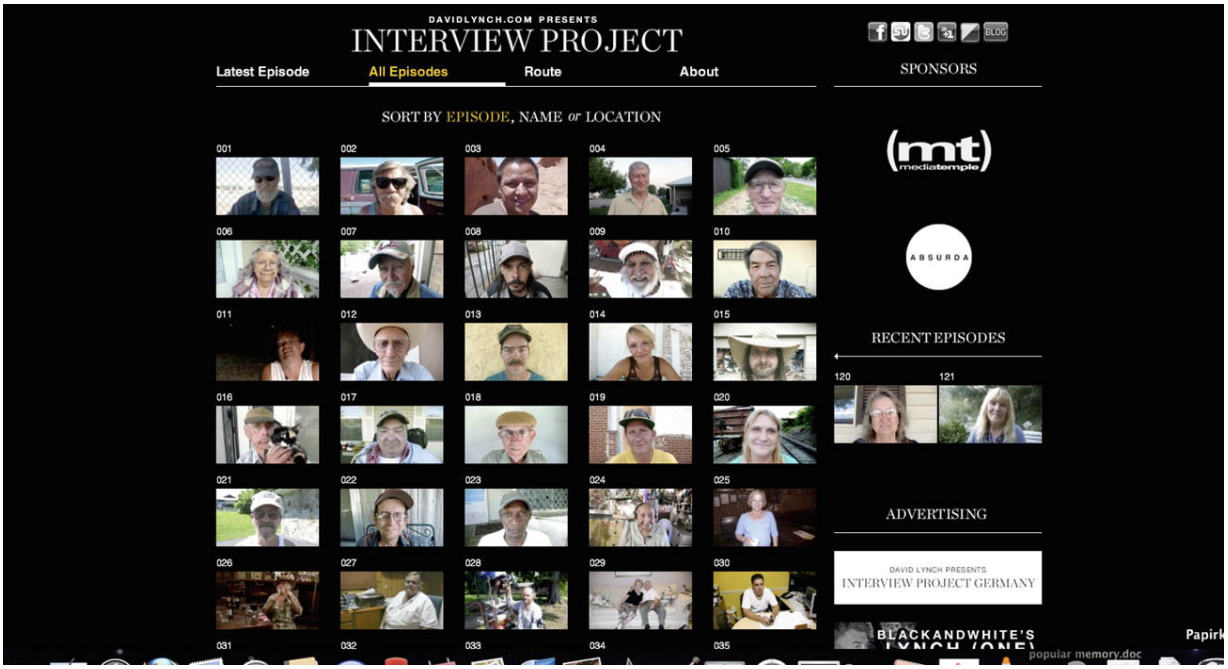


Illustration 4.1 The site (framegrab). © davidlynch.com

The comment functions on the site and on social media were deactivated a long time ago. Yet, the site could still be defined as an *i-doc* pertaining to the "database model" that "facilitates selection and recombination of documents and thereby offering a mode of documentary that more closely resembles an archive" (Hudson 2008: 90)—similarly, Siobhan O'Flynn coins the subgenre "databases of content fragments" (O'Flynn 2012: 142; see also Dovey and Rose 2013). Nevertheless, the *Interview Project* was a closed archive, which stopped expanding after the 121st portrait was posted on 27 May 2010.

Aston and Gaudenzi (2012) suggest an interactive mode called the "hypertext mode", which fits in with the *Interview Project*'s affordances. This mode of interactive documentary "links assets within a closed video archive and gives the user an exploratory role, normally enacted by clicking on pre-existing options" (Aston and Gaudenzi 2012: 127).

Its structure is semi-closed (ibid.: 146). The user, or what Aston and Gaudenzi calls the "interactant", can browse through—in the case of the *Interview Project*—121 portraits but not change the content of the site. Lynch himself is inscribed on the site as host and presenter. He has a semi-authorial position, but he functions more as an embodied i-doc curator (O'Flynn 2012: 152). He lent his site and his name to the project but left it to the user to choose his or her way through the online archive, which expanded on a regular basis over a year.

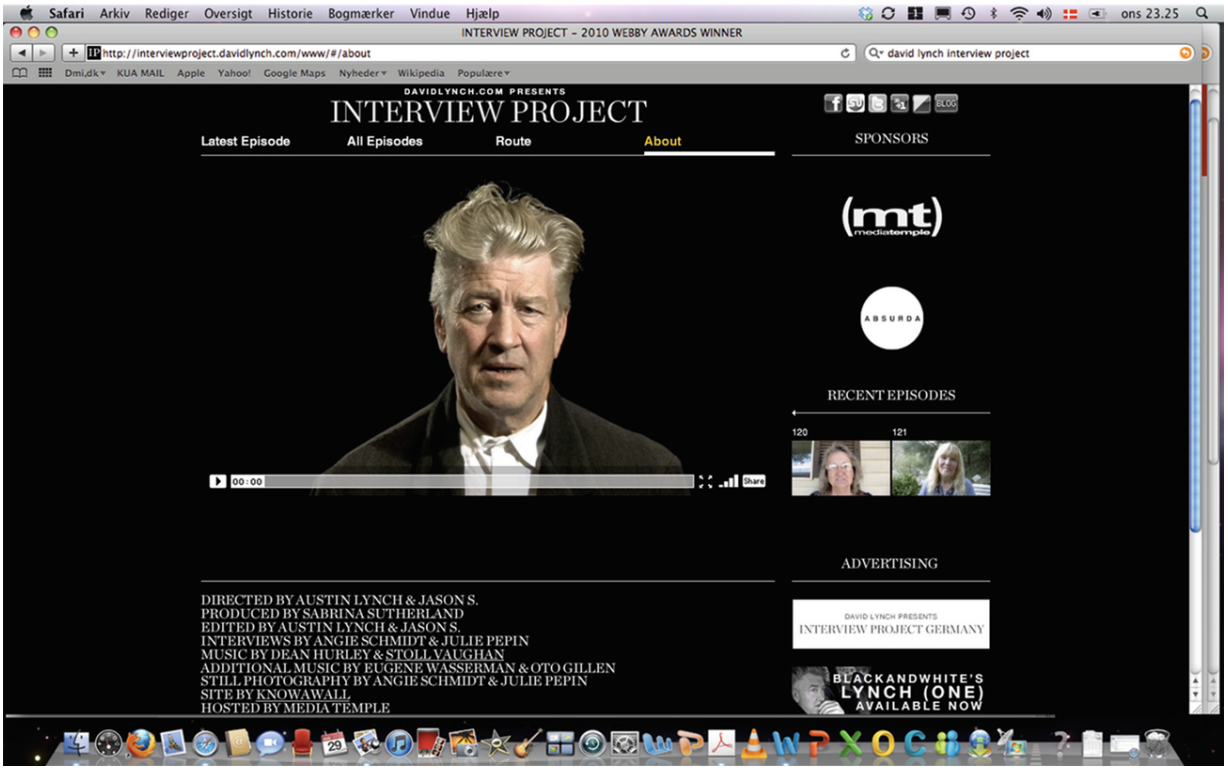
Evidently, though, the *Interview Project* was more than an i-doc consisting of 121 documentaries afforded by the Internet and located on a website hosted by Lynch. It was an intermedia project in which a range of different media (written words, photography, advertisements, logos, graphics and videos) were remediated and converged on a website where they mutually added meaning and atmosphere to each other. Despite the careful cinematic framing of each short documentary portrait, this conventional "indexing" (Plantinga 1997) of the films is inadequate. It does not account for the ways in which written text, photography and commentary combine with each film. They are not paratexts, to use Genette's (1997 [1982]) term but partake on equal terms with the films on the website and create what could be called an *intermedia documentary*.

The Website

Meetings

Each of the documentaries starts with distribution credits, "davidlynch.com presents". On the soundtrack we hear a—typically Lynchian—scratching polyphony of sounds, as if someone was turning quickly from station to station on an old-fashioned analogue radio. The letters begin zigzagging as if they were being disturbed by electric interference, and there is a cut to a close-up of Lynch himself, which starts in the same manner, distorted in the way analogue video signals react to disturbances (Illustration 4.2). Lynch says "Hello" and informs the viewer, by using a slightly outdated radio metaphor, that we are now "*tuned* in to *Interview Project* ". He addresses us in the present tense by saying "today we are meeting …", and thereby he creates a feeling of immediacy. Then he presents the person we are about to meet

in one sentence. Simultaneously there is a faint sound of distant thunder on the soundtrack, and a cut to a medium shot reveals that Lynch is sitting at his worktable in his studio, surrounded primarily by his tools for painting.



Illustrations 4.2 and 4.3 Lynch zigzagging and "David Lynch presents" (framegrabs). © davidlynch.com

The introductory sentences are often slightly surreal, for example in the introduction to Suzy (Episode 47): "Today we are meeting Suzy. Suzy is Daniella's aunt." We do not, of course, know Daniella, and Suzy never mentions her in the documentary. Some introductions are merely descriptive, though, like the introduction to Episode 113: "Today we are meeting Sean Freebourn. The team found Sean in my hometown, Missoula Montana." After the introduction of the interviewee, there is another close-up of Lynch, who invites us to "enjoy the interview" and a cut to a caption stating that opinions in the interview may not correspond with the general views of the *Interview Project* . Simultaneously, the soundtrack features the sound of another analogue medium, this time reminiscent of a gramophone record rotating in the same groove; just like the thunder, this is a well-known Lynchian audio trope.

Each documentary opens with a fragment of a statement by the interviewee in close-up followed by his or her name in white letters to the right on a black background. Often, the interviews end with images of the area and some music, after which the name of David Lynch's production company, Absurda, is credited in white letters on black, again accompanied by some signature Lynch sound. Each short portrait is thus carefully framed as a film.

When the mouse touches one of the frontpage images, a short bite from the interview sounds. If the mouse is hovered quickly across multiple images, a choir of voices is audible, reminiscent of the cacophony that is created when one quickly switches between stations on an analogue radio. There are several ways of accessing the documentaries, as already said, but a click on one of the front-page images, for example, prompts a short, written description of the interviewed person and how the team met him or her below the image frame. A second click starts the film. This, for example, is the text to Episode 23:

> While driving through the small town of Dumas, Arkansas we quickly spotted Anthony riding his blue bicycle along the road. We trailed him for several blocks before we could get in front of

> him to ask for the interview. He was extremely nice and told us to follow him to his home where he offered us some Sunny Delight to drink. Anthony told us about growing up in Detroit and about having a son at a very young age. Although Anthony has dealt with many hardships in his life he is still optimistic about the future. After the interview was over Anthony was going inside to make his wife's lunch so we said our goodbyes and headed deeper into the South.

Interview Project is about encounters between people and the mutual trust that is a prerequisite for such encounters between strangers to turn into conversations. *Interview Project* presents 121 such encounters between the project's production team and the people they met and asked for an interview on their journey through the USA.[9] In the same vein, as Lynch says in the introduction (Illustration 4.3), the site offers the users a meeting with these people by clicking on each of the photos and listening to their stories.

Many of the text vignettes stress that the encounter took place accidentally and that the interview was based on reciprocity. The texts thus emphasize the contingency of the encounter but also the sympathy that arose between the interview team and the interviewed persons during their conversation. The written text often ends on a cheerful note. It tells that the team said goodbye and moved on, in search of their next randomly happening encounter. As for the farewell to Suzy in Episode 47, we learn that "[w]hen we left Suzy she gave us a hug and wished us well", and in Episode 113 we are told that "[a]fter we were done we wished Sean well and hoped that he would continue to live a happy and healthy life".

Having Been There—"Indexical Traces"

The places in which meetings take place are registered on a map, the spaces are photographed, and the meetings are interpreted in the form of edited documentary portraits that are archived on a website and meant to be shared by the users, who may click on them in random order. Despite the overview of the road trip provided by the map, there is a striking emphasis on the accidental, the unplanned, that which was just there and happening right there. This gesture constitutes an

important strategy for the creation of a feeling of documentary real on the site. Another such strategy is the website's emphasis on the affordances instantaneity and immediacy through its continuous upload of new material. Finally, the third strategy of constructing documentary real is the many performances of photographic indexicality on the site, the documentations of "having been there" and "being here". Hence, the site recalls Rodowick's claim that "the photographic act is fundamentally *documentation*" (2007: 57).

The documentary real on the digital site is constructed through:

- The written texts' stress on accidental meetings.
- The project's emphasis on the development of the production process in continuous time. The portraits are the result of 70 days of travel, a road trip across the USA and back.
- The website's development over time at regular intervals: a new documentary was uploaded every third day until the final, 121st episode.
- The blog functionality that invited the posting of comments. What defines the blog as a digital genre is the time-based and dynamic principle of organization: the *frequency* of updates; the *order* of updates (an order of continuity, the newest entry placed first); and the *archival* function, which makes each new entry immediately storable as past. Hence, the blog genre itself unfolds along a logic of real time and instantaneity.
- David Lynch's repeated words of welcome to each new documentary, which stresses immediacy: "Hello. You are tuned into *Interview Project* . *Today* we are meeting …"
- The many close-ups and medium close-ups of the interviewees' faces and bodies, the majority of whom are middle-aged and older.
- The site's use of photography. Under each image of the interviewed person and the written vignette is a frieze of small photographs. Just like the "snapshots" in each documentary, the photographs show the interviewed person's home and surroundings taken while the team was there. By adding context and atmosphere to the audio-visual portrait, the photographs confer authenticity upon the documentary portrait. However, they also point to the encounter as pastness, having been. In that regard, they not only document but are conceived as *image memories* (Wahlberg 2008). At any rate, the

> photographs contribute to the creation of a complex temporality on the site, in which past, present and future coalesce.

In Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic understanding of the sign's index function (see, for example, Doane 2002), it functions as evidence, as trace. Bazin's understanding of the relationship between photography and the represented object resembles Peirce's description of the index. Bazin writes: "The photograph as such and the object in itself share a common being, after the fashion of the fingerprint" (Bazin 2005 [1967]: 15). Hence, indexicality suggests a physical connection between the sign and the represented object. However, film theorists Philip Rosen (2001) and Mary Ann Doane (2007), who both discuss Peirce's understanding of the index at length, emphasize the *temporal* dimension in Peirce's conceptualization of the term more than what is represented in the photograph. When Rosen talks about the indexical trace, he means that the objects depicted "were in the camera's 'presence' at some point prior to the actual reading of the sign" (Rosen 2001: 20). To Rosen, photographs are "indexical traces" in more than one sense. They are temporal imprints, "a matter of pastness", as he puts it (2001: 20), and as indexical traces they have "referential credibility" (ibid.).

Doane touches upon credibility in the same manner. She talks about "the pure markers of indexicality as the guarantee of an existence rather than a meaning" (2007: 18). However, she is no less than Rosen occupied with temporality and the index. In contrast to Barthes' (1980) understanding of the photograph as "*ça a été*" (this has been), as pointing to the melancholic historicity in the depicted photographic real, both Rosen and Doane argue for a more complex photographic temporality. They emphasize the presence of the object in a present that once was and as such they embed the activity of the past photographic act (someone took this photograph at a certain point in time) in their conceptualization of the indexical trace.

In continuation of these last contemplations of the index, I suggest that the photo friezes on the website bear another temporal imprint. They are not evidence of the represented people and objects having been there but, rather, of *the team's having been there*. They were there and met a person once, in a past present, which they left in order to aim at a new present. The photographs are not just imprints of what was in

front of the camera but of who was behind the camera at that particular moment in time, meeting someone, talking, listening and recording in order to later edit and upload. Texts, photographs and filmic snapshots add to the interviews what I would call a *pro-filmic indexicality*. Inasmuch as the photographs are traces of represented objects that were there, they bear the traces of a unique encounter. In other words, the photographs are traces, chiselled in time, of people meeting people.

Many of the photographic image memories are visual recollections of objects, landscapes, skies, road signs and so on. They are discontinuous fragments of the surroundings of the person portrayed, as captured by the eyes of the cinematographers. Many of the photographs show the imprint of time on objects scattered outside of the houses, "man and nature working together", as Lynch would have it: picturesque images of rusty tools or ornaments, peeled-off wood surfaces, weeds. However, they are also strong *deictic* signifiers exclaiming that "we were there, then!" Again, I draw a line to Mary Ann Doane's discussion about temporality and (audio-)visual media and her point that to Peirce, the index bears no likeness to its object but is attached to it in a more direct material way. Hence, she argues, the "indexicality is a function that is essentially without content—in language it is allied with the pure denotation of 'this' or 'here it is' (Doane 2002: 25). The index is "a hollowed-out sign" that "designates something without describing it" (Doane 2002: 92).[10]

In the *Interview Project*, the "sound of analogue" and the distorted screen images in Lynch's introduction, the photographs, the faces, the emphasis on contingency and the careful construction of the site as developing in time may thus be said to *perform* the function of indexical trace. Rosen's tautological term *indexical trace* can point out precisely what is going on on the site: how the trace is not only ontologically associated with the film as imprint of the real and indexically pointing to the presence of absence but also as a cinematic strategy that may support a documentary real. This take on the index also supports my argument about the sensuous snapshots as not only representations of things and places but indexical traces of a particular communicative act, a meeting.[11]

By means of the website's intermedia affordances, an additional level of meaning is added to the monological form of the

documentaries. As any traces of the interviewer are cut out in the documentaries, the photographs are made to act as *traces of the former dialogue*. They claim that documentary films are never finite and finished works. Documentaries are the result of, and embedded in, encounters as actual communicative processes. The intermedia affordances of the web make it possible for this basic indexically anchored claim to the real in documentary film production to be rendered visible.

Accordingly, photography, which in Bazin's words "embalms time" (2005 [1967]: 14) and adds a sense of real to the heavily edited short documentaries, is even attributed with something of the cinematic. A sense of movement is added to the photographs, not only because of the design on the site where they are placed side by side like a strip of frame grabs but also because of the overall feeling of mobility on the site—the continuous moving on by the team.

Despite the spatial intimacy and the personal things recounted by the interviewees, certain recurrent audio-visual strategies also ensure that a distance is conferred upon the close-ups and the people portrayed. At the same time as the site contextualizes each interview as social interaction and encounter, the person is captured—and respected—as a stranger. The portraits are thus only superficially communicating in the manner of the confessional discourses of contemporary "first-person media" (Dovey 2000). Thereby, the production team strengthens the humbleness they inscribe on the written text: for instance, interviewees occasionally direct their speech to someone outside the image frame instead of to us/the interviewer beside the camera. Interviewees are sometimes captured by the camera silent and motionless while their recounting voices continue on the soundtrack, just like their voices are heard in shots of the surrounding of their houses. These momentarily disembodied sounds of the shaky, hoarse or otherwise deeply personal voices function as aural equivalents to the index function of the photographic friezes. Moreover, there are cutaways in some interviews. The camera, for example, strays away to follow the source of a background noise, and some interviews start with a shot of an assistant who clicks the clapperboard before the recording of the interview.

The *indexical powers* (Rodowick 2004) in this intermedia documentary are therefore produced precisely by means of the many *pro-filmic traces* scattered across the site: of having stopped over at different places without a prior plan and having accidentally met different people and recorded their life story. This construction of space, time and atmosphere was made possible by the affordances of the website, which at once hosted the many short documentaries and created a whole new kind of documentary.

Traces of Time Passing

When clicking on "About" on the navigation bar, Lynch presents the project in a short video as

> a road trip where people have been found and interviewed [..] The people who were interviewed, each was different [..] The team found the people driving along the roads, going into bars, going into different locations, and there they were. The people told *their* story.[12]

This introduction to the project ends with a montage of black-and-white shots (the sound of an old-fashioned film projector heard in the background) in which some of the interviewees repeat one of the existential questions (cut from the interviews) they were asked by the team. For example: How would I describe myself? What were my dreams as a child? Do I have any regrets? What are my plans for the future? What am I most proud of? How would I like to be remembered? Answers to these big and difficult questions are often formulated in brief but concise sentences, for instance by 42-year-old Lynn (Episode 14). As a child, she was molested by her father, and when apparently asked how she would describe herself, she answers: "How would I describe myself? Broken … Broken, I guess." Or the big questions lead to touching, simple answers, like 67-year-old Mike (Episode 81), who confided to the interviewer that the most important thing in his life was when he met his wife many years ago. Having apparently been asked how he would like to be remembered, he answers: "I would like to be remembered as George Case's husband, who lived at 404 North Maine Lagan and didn't bother people, just liked to have a pretty house and

that's it." Likewise, the older woman Astrid said (Episode 33): "I'd like to be remembered as a good women … Not a lady, a woman." And Cindy (Episode 38) said that she would like to be remembered "just as me, as, you know, the fun we all had, growing up in high school, and, just, remembering me, as me". A final example is 17-year-old Amber (Episode 119), who would like to be remembered as "someone who was always there for everyone, that was kind to everyone".

While the commentary blog still existed, it stated that the *Interview Project* is "a portrait of everyday Americans filmed during an extensive road trip through the United States". Yet, in his short introduction to the site, Lynch emphasizes the difference between the interviewed people. In itself, the large number of short films shows that there is, to a certain extent, no everyday American. The project team were not looking for eccentrics or people who could tell dramatic or spectacular life stories —even though some deeply traumatic stories are told. The mere abundance of interviews in combination with the condensed telling of a life constructed by the editing of the films stresses the uniqueness of human life. The portraits in their entirety show that ordinary life is, in all its banality and in spite of the modesty and humility many of the interviewees expressed, anything but insignificant.

The many images of worn-out voices, wrinkles and furrows, mottled chins, grey hair and baldness, of reminiscences of strokes, in short, of the traces that the passing of time continuously and irreversibly leave on the body, point in an entirely different direction to the temporal "quick changes" produced by the digital morph, which Louise Krasniewicz discusses in Vivian Sobchack's edited volume not only as technology and aesthetics but also as a metaphor for a contemporary condition. To Krasniewicz, the morph is "a marker of our time, a time in which morphlike activities and events are overwhelming our sense of boundaries, space, direction, identity and time" (Krasniewicz 2000: 54). In morphing, time implodes, and the transformations leave no trace. In the *Interview Project* , by contrast (as in *The Straight Story* and the factory photographs which I discussed in the preceding chapter), traces of the transformations caused by time abound.

Lynch's project thus enters into dialogue with a central discussion concerning time in contemporary (digital) society, formulated by David Rodowick as "how we experience or inhabit duration as the passing of

present time" (2007: 74). Rodowick phrases this temporal tension quite delicately: as human beings, we are placed in a present that contains both past and future. Therefore, we are fragile beings struggling with the contingencies of time without really knowing how. This sentiment of the fragile and contingent, but nevertheless of lived life as unfolding in continuous time, is inscribed on the intermedia documentary site through the images and voices of the interviewed people. Simultaneously, the website gives voice to people from rural areas across the US who are seldom represented in the media and whose reflections upon their lives would not otherwise have been told.

The *Interview Project* is a beautiful example of the website's ability to create—and distribute—a new form of documentary. In Lynch's other, larger digital work, the fiction film *Inland Empire* , which I will turn to in the following, he focuses on the digital and media technology. In contrast to the *Interview Project* , which makes and provides access to stories about real people, *Inland Empire* could be said to meditate upon a contemporary world of screens and the blurring of boundaries between different screened worlds.

The Post-perspectival and Post-cinematic: Screens and Time in INLAND EMPIRE

A World of Digital Screens

In *Catching the Big Fish* , Lynch argues that the grainy quality of the Sony PD images makes it possible for the mind to "go dreaming". I quote from the vignette "DV quality":

> The DV camera I currently use is a Sony PD-150, which is a lower quality than HD. And I love the lower quality. I love the small cameras. The quality reminds me of the films of the 1930s. In the early days, the emulsion wasn't so good, so there was less information on the screen. The Sony PD result is a little bit like that; it is nowhere near high-def. Sometimes, in a frame, if there's some question about what you're seeing, some dark corner, the mind can go dreaming. If everything is crystal clear in that frame, that's what it is, that's *all* it is. (Lynch 2006: 153)

The lightweight digital camera and its image aesthetics turned out to be an efficient tool to accomplish the aesthetic project, which Lynch has turned into images and narratives and repeated again and again in interviews over the years—the creation of worlds and the blurring of boundaries between different levels of reality, one not more real than the other. *Inland Empire* is, according to Lynch himself, "an experiment". In the intriguing documentary *Lynch (One)*, in which we see him announce to the davidlynch.com subscribers that he will start a new film, he also admits, almost depressed, that "I don't know what it is exactly".[13]

In the Village Voice, J. Hoberman criticized the nearly three-hour-long *Inland Empire*, which he called "a movie about Lynch's obsessions", for its lack of concentration: "It's a miasma. Cheap DV technology has opened Lynch's mental floodgates. *Inland Empire* is suffused with dread of … what? Sex, in Lynch, is a priori nightmarish. But there is a sense here that film itself is evil" (Hoberman 2006). All the same, Hoberman ventures into speculations about what the film is about and suggests that *Inland Empire* might be regarded as a "meditation on the power of recording". Indeed, in light of Lynch's ecstatic praise of digital equipment's technological and aesthetic possibilities and his equally passionate critique of analogue film equipment, Hoberman's argument makes sense: the film meditates upon Hollywood film production and 35 mm recording practices. Moreover, one could argue that the heavy 35 mm camera used on the film set in the film and the Hollywood film industry that the camera stands in for—what Nochimson (2013) refers to as "the marketplace"—is, just like in *Mulholland Drive*, a powerful agent responsible for producing "dark danger" (Groys and Ujica 2006: 109) in Lynch's images.

A range of film critics looked in another direction in trying to make sense of *Inland Empire*. They analogized with the logic and hybrid structure of the Internet. Kristin M. Jones (2007) compared the film, which she saw "[r]iddled with shifts between places and levels of reality", to "wormholes, rabbit holes or web portals". Amy Taubin (2007) referred to author William Gibson's comparison of Borrough's cut-up technique with "adjacent data" and stated that she "can't think of a better description of *Inland Empire*". Dennis Lim (2007) thought that *Inland Empire* "progresses with the darting, associative logic of

hyperlinks".[14] Zoran Samardzija (2010) later expanded on Lim's digital metaphor and proposed that *Inland Empire*'s overall pattern resembles a "hyperlink temporal structure", "more akin to a web where individual moments hyperlink to each other and other Lynch films". And finally, Allister Mactaggart also compared the film with the web:

> *INLAND EMPIRE* is a film whose structure and style is in keeping with the technological interconnectedness that the World Wide Web and the internet provide [...] the structure and mood of the film echoes that of the topology of the internet, where paths cross, interlink and sometimes knot. (Mactaggart 2010: 153)

I agree with these latter thoughts and think of *Inland Empire* along the line of the heterogeneous, the fragmented, the discontinuous. *Inland Empire* is juxtaposing elements side by side instead of creating causality. More than film, it is a moving image digital composite (Shaviro 2010), the logic of which makes sense when compared with a website with an elaborate hyperlink structure. In Shaviro's *Post-Cinematic Affect*, *Inland Empire* resembles "the cutting-and-pasting of elements that are synchronically available in a database" and "replaces the suturing of shots that unfold diachronically" (2010: 77). Along the same line, I engage with *Inland Empire* as a *hyperlink narrative*, and I discuss the connection between temporality and the hyperlink structure. Although *Inland Empire* is taking its point of departure from a well-known cinematic plot (a film about the production of a film), the film is as much occupied with *image projection* and *visual perception*, with *framing* and *screens*, as it is with recording and production. In the following discussion on *Inland Empire*, I argue that the film may be regarded as an aesthetic reflection upon *mediation*, upon the ways in which the world increasingly is presented to us and unfolds through a ubiquity of screens.[15]

Inland Empire offers a view of the contemporary mediatized and digitized condition. It presents a world of screens characterized by the simultaneous coexistence and blurring of boundaries between real and virtual spaces. Boundaries between past and present are likewise blurred, and the female protagonist has no choice but to adjust to ever-new mediated points of view, which always change in tune with the

changing of the screen. In this take on the film, I am inspired by Anne Friedberg's (2006) book in which she analyses a new visual reality of multiple screens and their many and overlapping forms of representation. Friedberg argues that the screen is not just a material object but constitutes material and social practices that surround us and into which we are enmeshed. The screen creates another material, virtual, reality—where virtual in Friedberg's take on the term is not reserved for digitally produced images or virtual reality (VR) but refers more generally to the *transfer* "from one plane of meaning and appearance to another" (2006: 11). Screens create realities on different levels and of different substance. What Friedberg is interested in is not the realities screened but the screen as a reality itself and its relation to other screens.

To Friedberg, the screen is a hypermediating technology for creating multiple spaces (or what Lynch would call worlds) rather than a metaphor such as, for instance, the window or the mirror. A screen may of course contain metaphorical windows and be embedded in different media (cinema, television, laptops, smartphones), each of which frame vision in a different manner. However, screens may also contain other screens, for instance the computer screen with its many folders and files or a website with its many hyperlinks. These are examples of what Friedberg calls "the fractured multiplicity of the multiple 'windowed' screen" (Friedberg 2006: 19), and they epitomize communication in a digitized society. Following from this, Friedberg suggests that, in a media culture saturated with projection screens and frames of all kinds, we:

> as the beholders of multiscreen "windows" […] now receive images—still and moving, large and small, artistic and commercial—in spatially and temporally fractured frames. This new space of mediated vision is post-Cartesian, postperspectival, postcinematic and posttelevisual, and yet remains within the delimited bounds of a frame and seen on a screen. (Friedberg 2006: 7)

Drawing on Friedberg, I suggest understanding *Inland Empire* as an experimental enactment of *the post-perspectival*—which I understand

as both an aesthetic practice and a way of viewing the world, just like it requires new ways of seeing. Friedberg asks the intriguing question, which is pertinent to the impossible way of looking that *Inland Empire* demands: "Is there a new logic to vision as our windows, frames, screens are even more fractured and virtually multiplied" (ibid.: 242). The answer is, I guess, that it goes for *Inland Empire* that we are forced to adapt a view on the film that is as fractured as the film itself.

Moreover, with regard to the Friedberg quote, I also look at the film as an apt example of the post-cinematic (Shaviro 2010; Denson and Leyda 2016; Grusin 2016 [2007]). *Post-cinematic* is a term within film studies that designates the embedding and, therefore, transformation of film as a distinctive medium within a broader digital media ecology. Richard Grusin (2016 [2007]) argues for the term *digital cinema of interactions* in order to elucidate that in a contemporary digital media environment, film must necessarily be regarded as interacting with other digital media. Therefore, cinema studies require new analytical tools in order to grasp "a distributed form of cinema, which demands we rethink the cinema as object of study and analysis, to recognize that a film does not end after its closing credits" (Grusin 2016 [2007]: 71–72). Moreover, he contends that "the experience of the film in the theater is part of a more distributed aesthetic or cinematic experience" (ibid.: 71).

Grusin is interested in the changes towards a new media ecology of hybrid and networked forms of distribution and exhibition. By contrast, both Denson and Leyda (2016) and Shaviro (2010) deploy the term for a new form of media/cinematic sensibility, caused by the transition to digitization and the transformations following intermediality and changed forms of distribution. In their introduction to the comprehensive volume *Post-Cinema: Theorizing 21st-Century Film*, Denson and Leyda (2016) apply the volume's discussions of post-cinema to new formal strategies, new ways of viewing and new ways of addressing spectators. They ask about a new form of sensibility or, following Raymond Williams, a new "structure of feeling" in a post-cinematic culture. This question also occupies Steven Shaviro (2010, 2016). He relates to the same terms as a means to synthesize a diverse range of post-classical "post-continuity styles" in his efforts to conceptualize what he calls a "critical aesthetics of contemporary

culture" (2016: 60). Shaviro is focused on aesthetic structures and changed filmic forms, which he discusses in film but also in music videos in *Post-Cinematic Affect* (2010). Additionally, he brings into focus the connection between post-cinema and affect (which he, in the wake of Brian Massumi (2002), understands as a dynamic intensity, an unformed atmosphere or spatial layering that may be transformed into specific emotions).

I accord with Shaviro and Denson and Leyda. In *Inland Empire* affect is produced by the disparate assembly of highly emotional fragments that fits in well with Shaviro's understanding of the post-cinematic. *Inland Empire* constitutes an assemblage of incommensurable digital screens, which are unhierarchically ordered side by side and on top of each other. A manifestation of this unhierarchical ordering is the many superimpositions in the film. Moreover, narrative development is more likely a confusing "proximity of repetition" (Thain 2010: 97) held loosely together as if by a wandering mind browsing the Internet.[16] The film's assemblage or "composite" of dislocated worlds of screens corresponds with a post-cinematic "multiple and fractured" mode of perception (Friedberg : 194) and a concomitant sense of "fractured subjectivity" (ibid.: 233). The audience is immersed into fictional spaces with no clear demarcations and a time without continuity. They are trapped in a distorted, fractured environment together with the main character, Nikki Grace, who seems to pass bewilderedly from one world to the other through one strange or impossible passage after another. This approximately three-hour-long film offers no clear boundaries between different screened levels of reality, no clear "master frame", to borrow another term from Friedberg. Hence, the window metaphor, which designates the linear perspective, a detached and fixed point of view and a corresponding geometrically ordered view upon the world, gives way to a non-hierarchical, fragmented, image- and sound-saturated digital composite metaphor in this post-perspectival, post-cinematic work of art.[17] To cite art historian Joseph Nechvatal, whom I will return to in the next chapter, a post-cinematic aesthetics

> deframes and overwhelms the envelope of hardened fixed-point (i.e. window) perception with aesthetic input and, hence, is an

> excess in and for the prosaic gaze as it offers an immersive scope beyond our perceptive capabilities. (Nechvatal 2016: 219)

This simultaneous and continuous framing and deframing, what Nechvatal calls "excess", is the precarious connection between the different levels; they each appear as a different world into which one can be immersed. Despite their "proximity of repetition", to quote Alanna Thain once more, what does separate these digitized levels or worlds is their foregrounding of the particular media materiality through which the hypermediated aesthetic in the film is evoked. *Inland Empire* suggests again and again that the immaterial is also material. Screens have a material presence at the same time as they transfer "virtual" realities (in Friedberg's use of the term "virtual") between and into other screens. They constitute the fractured reality and, as *Inland Empire* indeed shows, a fractured sense of subjectivity.

In the following discussion on Lynch's digitally shot film, I will attempt to unravel aspects of the film's strange and complicated post-cinematic structure by focusing on how it deconstructs continuous time and coherent space. My point will not be that the hyperlink narrative's dissolution of continuous time is arrived at because of the affordances of digital media technology Lynch had at his disposition and used to that extent for the first time. On the contrary, digital technology merely made it much easier for Lynch to accomplish the endeavour to aesthetically blur boundaries he had worked with in many different media and materials before *Inland Empire*.[18] The transgressive, "excessive", post-cinematic screen aesthetics in *Inland Empire* is not solely enabled by digital technology. But it has multiplied in this film, in which time implodes within the diegesis simultaneously with the constitution of space as a web of intertwined and overlapping screens and scenes.

The Film

Inland Empire is the story of the actress Nikki Grace, who lands the leading role as Susan (Sue) Blue in what turns out to be a remake of an unfinished Polish film concerning murder, jealousy and love. The leading stars of the original Polish film were murdered during shooting, and the new film seems to have inherited this curse. The set is haunted,

and Nikki appears to gradually lose track of reality as well as the ability to distinguish between herself and her role as Susan Blue in the film, between the new film and (her fantasy of) the original Polish film. She moves between different characters and worlds, each of which has its own atmosphere and mise-en-scène. Altogether they compose a barely unified collection of temporal and spatial fragments: the original Polish film; the original Polish film featuring Nikki; the American production of the film *On High in Blue Tomorrows* (on and off screen). Moreover, there are human beings dressed in ordinary clothes but looking like rabbits who are performing scenes in what seems to be a sitcom—so the presence of a laugh track and the generic sitcom mise en scène and acting towards the audience suggests—even though the exact scale is hard to figure out as the stage seems the size of a doll's house. In addition, there is (perhaps) a kind of story about Polish American prostitutes. At one point they perform a dance and lip-sync act to Little Eva's 1960s hit song "Locomotion", after which they disappear as if by magic like in a silent cinema trick film. Or they vanish following an imaginary click on another link, which opens a new window to another world made possible by some invisible webmaster's construction of a site. Finally, there is Nikki's Hollywood mansion, where she lives with her possessive husband and where she is visited by a strange woman who speaks obsessively about living in a discontinuous time in which consequences nevertheless follow actions:

> I can't seem to remember if it's today, two days from now or yesterday. I suppose if it was 9:45, I'd think it was after midnight! For instance, if today was tomorrow, you wouldn't even remember that you owed on an unpaid bill. Actions do have consequences. And yet, there is the magic. If it was tomorrow, you would be sitting over there.

Later in the film, a woman whom Nikki meets in one of the rooms she has entered or re-entered through some virtual (invisible) or real passage (a door) in either the American or the unfinished Polish film repeats the words regarding owing on an unpaid bill. This might suggest that the film—like *Mulholland Drive* —takes place in a split second, in the twisted mind of the strange woman who apparently

knows more about Nikki's future than Nikki herself. This proposal might be supported with reference to a subjective shot of the woman's finger, which points towards an empty sofa in Nikki's salon after her last remark about the confusion of yesterday, today and tomorrow. "Can you see it?" she asks Nikki. When Nikki turns her head, a POV shot shows her sitting "over there", on the sofa, together with two girlfriends.

We return to Nikki's mansion by the end of the film and the wide-angle shot of the strange woman and the following shot of Nikki who turns her head and looks "over there", in the direction of the strange woman's pointing finger, is repeated. However, what Nikki sees at this point in time is herself sitting alone in a formal and peaceful pose (unlike in the earlier scene in which she was chatting with her girlfriends and received the message that she had landed the part in the film). It may therefore also be possible to understand the film as Nikki's stream of consciousness, her imagination of a journey towards a more self-reliant and confident person, released from her entrapment in an endless repetition of unhomely spaces. Perhaps the film illustrates the change she imagines for herself in the split second in which she turns her head in the direction of the sofa and sees first herself chatting with her girlfriends and then seemingly relaxed, clad in an informal light blue dress. Or maybe the film is a staging of a fantasy of Nikki's nightmarish and gradually more releasing journey towards selfhood by a disembodied and non-diegetic narrator.

No matter how the narrative may be interpreted, the film's many screened worlds render a strong sense of visual enigma, which is emphasized by Lynch's use of the Sony PD-150 camera. This "outdated low-end digital camera", as Amy Taubin calls it, and which she claims in her review of the film "produces images that look like nothing but video" (Taubin 2007: 57), creates an impression as if the images of the film were "decomposing before your eyes, as if any minute they are going to disappear into a void, and the extreme lighting adds to the effect" (ibid.: 57). Or as Allister Mactaggart proposes (2010: 142), Lynch investigates the PD-150's "weaknesses" in order to use it creatively. Unlike *Mulholland Drive* , where a fairly coherent story emerges once the riddle of the temporal structure has been solved, *Inland Empire* follows its aesthetic principle of visual enigma and

disconnected spaces to the very end—spaces which, as Taubin puts it only becomes contiguous because they reside "in the selects bin on Lynch's Avid hard drive" (ibid.). More radically than in both *Mulholland Drive* and *Lost Highway* , *Inland Empire* refuses narrative coherence, "written scene by scene and shot in bits and pieces" as it is (Jones 2007).

"Some Newer Media Form": Transgressing the Boundaries between Media

In his article about *Inland Empire* , Zoran Samardzija (2010) suggests that the film gives the impression of an unfinished work. Through its interaction with dispersed audiences, it is in a perpetual state of becoming. The narrative could go in many different directions, depending upon the chosen route in the non-hierarchical web of *digital events* (Rodowick 2007), at the centre of which stands Laura Dern as the troubled actress/character(s). There is no evident organizing visual layer or superior level of reality to which to return, merely a strong sense of the "instability of the image" (Taubin 2007: 57). There is no inside or outside. As in many of Lynch's other films, there is no clear temporal order or linear succession.

Inland Empire is indisputably an approximately 180-minute-long film, complete with title sequence and end credits, and released in selected cinemas. However, it is more than that. The film began as an extended monologue presented by Laura Dern for www.davidlynch.com. With the addition of other ideas along the way, it eventually became a film (see, for example, Lynch 2006; Nochimson 2013). Steven Shaviro (2007) argues on his blog that, in *Inland Empire* , Lynch is "rethinking what film might mean" in "our post-cinematic, video-centric and thoroughly digitized age". Digital video's technological and aesthetic affordances—the ability to shoot very long takes and thereby to create a sense of intimacy, immediacy and interiority—moreover, the Sony PD-150's "terrible quality", which "conceals more information than it reveals for audiences" (Samardzija 2010), and finally the film's fractured sequential flow contribute to understand *Inland Empire* as "constructed in such a way that it is no longer a movie any longer, but some newer media form" (Shaviro 2007).

Shaviro does not go deeper into what he means by this rather loose, yet perceptive remark and he contends that *Inland Empire is* film. Not only does it connect strongly with Lynch's earlier works, it also makes use of cinematic codes, even as it deconstructs them radically. However, both Shaviro and the critics to whom I have referred regard *Inland Empire* as formally resembling an intermedial hybrid. It is a digitally shot film, which takes on formal similarities with a website's hyperlinked layering of screens/windows. It is consistently disclosing new and different worlds from new points of view and it keeps drawing attention to the intermedial simultaneity of different forms of media and screens.

The screen spaces are enigmatic presentations of worlds and purveyors of atmospheres. The screens in *Inland Empire* are either transparent or invisible frames—Nikki looks at herself within the same space frame, for instance, or a change of screen is subtly marked by a change in image texture. Moreover, there are monitors for displaying surveillance images (recorded and/or transmitted in real time), television screens or the screen in a cinema, which is at once a "silver screen" and a surface that displays in real time what takes place in front of it. As differences between planes of real and virtual are blurred and the origins of both recorded and screened space are continually rendered obscure, the film creates a strong sense of temporal simultaneity. Yet, at the same time, occurrences in different screen spaces seemingly unfold in keeping with different temporalities. The mirror logic in the *mise en abyme* figure (of which there are a few in the film) seems in *Inland Empire* to be replaced by a fragmented "desktop aesthetics" (Willis 2005) without the *mise en abyme*'s obvious formal symmetry. So, in *Inland Empire* , time and space merge and collapse into a confusing blending of the "real" and the "screened". Just as significantly, the many projections in the film point to *Inland Empire* itself as a digital screen.

Like *Mulholland Drive* , *Inland Empire* takes its point of departure from the Hollywood film industry. But the hyperlink structure obscures any precise recognition of where and when the film production takes place, that is, whether what we see is something being recorded or a projection of something that has been recorded.

By the end of the film, Nikki—or Nikki as Susan—staggers through Hollywood, mortally wounded, and lies down to die on the Walk of Fame among a trio of homeless people. The two women in the group talk about whether one can take a bus directly to Pomona, and then one of them, framed in close-up, speaks at length about her friend Nico in Pomona,[19] who is a prostitute and addicted to hard drugs; she has a "hole in her vagina wall" and knows that "her time has run out".[20] The telling of this sad and uncanny story lasts a while, and as it ends, the camera returns to Nikki, who spits blood and dies while the other woman lights a candle for her with her lighter. But then a zoom-out reveals a diegetic analogue 35 mm camera. This camera withdraws slowly, like a giant dinosaur. Apparently, it performs a similar movement as the camera behind it, which is still filming. We hear the director's voice order "Cut" and then "And print it!". The actor and the two actresses who have played the homeless people immediately rise and leave the set while Nikki lies motionless on the ground framed in a long shot—as if she were actually dead. Then she slowly gets up and the director encourages everybody on set to applaud her performance.

So, there were actually two cameras in this sequence, one diegetic and one non-diegetic. Moreover, they were focusing their close-up on a different part of the scene. The diegetic camera, the 35 mm analogue camera, is obviously part of *Inland Empire*'s Hollywood film production story, and it films the female protagonist's grand finale—hence the director's call for applause. The other camera frames the dying scene as we have just seen it. This camera, which places Nikki off screen, is either non-diegetic or it is placed in some unknown diegetic space from where someone operates it. The part of the dying scene made visible in the film showed close-ups of the homeless woman and just the last part of Nikki's performance, which the people on set were urged to applaud and which was supposedly shot with the revealed 35 mm camera. So, how are we to understand the presence of two cameras at the end of the scene? Obviously, we have not been watching what was framed by the diegetic director's camera but instead what another camera chose to frame. Again, it is as if someone had decided to click on one hyperlink instead of another and chosen to stay there and watch. Undoubtedly, the scene blurs boundaries between diegetic and non-diegetic and

between film as a demarcated work and film as a post-cinematic, more unbound and unlimited audio-visuality.

Nikki's male co-star at one point follows the sound of what seems like a person eavesdropping on his and Nikki's rehearsal. He returns unsuccessfully and concludes: "She disappeared where it is real' hard to disappear." The remark adds to the atmosphere of mystery dispersed across the film, which Jennifer Pranolo calls "a haunted web across space, time and media" (2011: 481)—how would he know it was a "she". But the remark could equally be understood as a self-conscious reference to the hyperlink logic, in which a click on a link closes access to one screen and makes a new screen appear that may have little connection with the former. From this perspective, the film might certainly be understood as unfolding along the logic of *a newer media form*, resembling a (filmic) *interface*, which Anna Munster perceptively understands as a "space of both representation and action" (2006: 136). Even though *Inland Empire* is not an interactive film, it inscribes a logic of interactivity.

Inland Empire is a narrative, yet it is utterly incoherent, *and* it constitutes a formal interplay between different digital screens or surfaces. *Inland Empire* thus aesthetically enacts in filmic form what Anne Friedberg reminds us of in the opening lines of her book: "How the world is framed may be as important as what is contained within that frame" (Friedberg 2006: 1). *Inland Empire*'s hyperlink structure of screens within screens creates a disturbing imagination of a post-perspectival condition in which the world cannot possibly be framed from one master perspective and where it is not possible to create any stable subject position.

The Digital Event

Instead of repeating often advanced arguments about intertextuality in Lynch's works (see, for example, Mactaggart 2010), it would be more in line with this chapter's view upon the film to say that the rabbit sitcom scenes inserted into the beginning and end of the film are copied from Lynch's website and pasted into the film (or cut-and-pasted from www.davidlynch.com to *Inland Empire*).[21] The film's overall hyperlinked composition of disparate and contingently connected scenes may be further illuminated with reference to David Rodowick's (2007) notion

of *the digital event*. The digital event is Rodowick's term for the particular characteristics and affordances of digital film in his discussion of (the disappearance of) filmic specificity in the age of digital media. Rodowick describes digital film as a collection of independently manipulable data and the digital event is any computer operation, any manipulation or transformation of digital information on any layer or level of film production, from the shot—or what Rodowick prefers to call the "capture"—to the filmic montage or compositing. The digital event is "any discrete alteration of image or sound data at whatever scale internal to the image" (Rodowick 2007: 167). For Rodowick, digital film is basically composite or montage by nature. There is no *whole* on any level in digital cinema (cf. Manovich 2001 for similar points). The shot is not a single unit. Any part of an image can be broken down into pixels and manipulated independently from all of the others.

Hence, the "digital event" is Rodowick's term for the particular aesthetic possibilities of digital film technology. As such,

> the digital event corresponds less to the duration and movement of the world than to the control and variation of discrete numerical elements internal to the computer's memory and logical processes. (Rodowick 2007: 166)

As a metaphor, the concept addresses what Rodowick regards as one of the characteristics of digital cinema as a medium, its lack of temporality. Digital film confers upon him a sense of "time lost", caused by the lack of analogue film's indexical inscription of time, its traces of the past. Rodowick therefore proposes that we speak of *a different ontology* as regards digital film, characterized by "an increased attention to the present and to the control of information" (ibid.).

The digital event is a useful metaphor for not only the way the diegesis continuously collapses in Lynch's film but also its *capture aesthetic*, the way single shots provide the impression of being cut-and-pasted from different (Lynchian) image data archives. An example is the cross-cutting between Nikki and the strange woman who comes to visit at the beginning of the film.

Nikki's face is shot in close-up and framed symmetrically, whereas the woman's face is shown in a skewed ultra-close-up that cuts off the upper part of her hair. The slightly distorted wide-screen ultra-close-ups of the strange woman's face and the harsh light that comes from a window in the background (maybe one of the PD-150's "weaknesses", its poor ability to adjust light smoothly) give the impression that the woman's face has been digitally inserted into the space from somewhere else. Therefore, time dissociates from space and becomes distorted too—just like the woman apparently knows something that has not yet happened. The woman is not firmly anchored in space either. After she has told Nikki that she has definitely landed the part, a second of the shot seems to have been deleted. Accordingly, the woman's speech collapses, as if she were an automaton stalled for a fragment of time or some data had been lost by the pasting of her face into the scene. Nikki observes this ultra-short breakdown but then the woman resumes, and the uncanny conversation goes on.

Screens and Surveillance

We repeatedly get the impression that we are not only looking into worlds through the bewildered eyes of Nikki, (one of) her film character(s) or an omniscient disembodied film narrator. We are looking at *recordings* of past events or *transmissions* of real-time events projected onto a surface or displayed on a monitor. The film's layering of different points of view and the repeated use of wide-angle long shots of rooms and wide-angle close-ups of faces create a strong sense of surveillance, as if the images were procured by different sorts of digital image technology, each of which was intended for automated capture.[22] Shifting image textures emphasize the feeling that the film shifts constantly between diegetic on-screen and off-screen spaces, between pre-recorded screenings and real-time projections, between screenings and some kind of real. And because past, present and future are mixed and create a confusing simultaneity, the difference between projections of stored data and real-time transmission is blurred too. The film seems like an apt example of Lev Manovich's suggestion from the beginning of the 2000s that the "image", at least in the way we have usually understood the term, has disappeared:

> It is only by habit that we still refer to what we see on the real-time screen as 'images' [...] Yet such an image is no longer the norm, but the exception of a more general, new kind of representation for which we do not yet have a term. (Manovich 2001: 100)

Manovich's discussion of real-time transmission ends with an outline of what he calls a *screen genealogy*. He defines the screen in the most general sense as the existence of another space. The screen, or what he calls the "classical screen", "separates two absolutely different spaces *that somehow coexist*": a represented space and "our normal space, the space of our body" (Manovich 2001: 95—my italics). The screen (whether a canvas or a computer screen) is the mediating "interface" or the threshold between different spaces and different levels of reality. The *classical screen* is the window screen, which places us in front of a world different in scale to the real world, large or small depending upon the medium. The *dynamic screen* places the viewer in the same fixed position as the classical screen, but it is the screen of moving images—first cinema, then television and video. In Manovich's screen genealogy, these technologies are now disappearing, and the dynamic screen has been replaced by the computer screen's disparate multimedia text formats, complete with the possibility of manipulating separate clusters of data. Or the framed screen disappears entirely as a material frame and is replaced by virtual reality's merging of screen and sight.

Examples of the third type of screen, the digital *screen of real time*, includes interfaces/screens of real-time transmissions such as Zoom, the smartphone, live video, or the screening of real-time surveillance footage on a reality show or in a control room. Thomas Y. Levin (2002) has discussed this screen of real time in depth, albeit focusing in particular on fiction films about surveillance. Levin argues that a change took place in surveillance narratives, beginning with the famous finale of Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation* (1974). First, there was a shift in representation from "a *thematic* to a *structural* engagement of surveillance" (Levin 2002: 582—italics in this and the following quotes in original), from surveillance as plot to surveillance enacted at the level of enunciation. This shift is performed in *The*

Conversation but gains special prominence in films from the 1990s, where the ambiguous mix between surveillance as a thematic concern and as the point of origin of narration is played out. Secondly, the discussion about surveillance images' claim to truth was scrutinized by shifting the thematic focus from "surveillance as a *recorded observation* to surveillance as *real-time transmission*" (ibid.: 585) (for example, in *The Conversation* and Peter Weir's *The Truman Show* (1998), respectively).[23] Cinema thus invoked what Levin interestingly terms a new "rhetoric of *temporal indexicality*" (ibid.: 592) in which indexicality resides not in photography's arrested *having-been-there*-ness but in *live-now*-ness. There was a movement from the indexical trace to indexical live-ness: fiction films like *The Truman Show* constructed rhetorically one of the specificities of early reality television programmes, i.e., a truth claim based on the impossibility of manipulating real-time transmitted images.

Inland Empire is in one regard a suitable example of Levin's concept of surveillance narration and filmic "diegeticized surveillant omniscience" (ibid.: 589). However, the construction of time and point of view in Lynch's film is more ambitious and more complicated than is the mere spectacle of (simulated) real time. *Inland Empire* is constructed along a structure of clashes and blurring of boundaries between different visual regimes and screened times, in which it is difficult to locate a diegetic present or a primary focalization—whether we look at a screen of real-time transmission, a screen of projected film or a screen that projects surreptitious observations. The visual field is both expanded and fragmented by the ubiquity of screens. The perspectival framing and focalization in photographic media multiply and disintegrate in the film, which makes questions concerning the what, when and where harder and harder to answer as the film moves along. The framing is at times invisible. At other times, camera angles, short passages of slow motion or stop motion, a shift from black and white to colour, a shift in focalization and the sharpness of the image surface, or the sudden exposure of the digital image's pixels draw attention to the images as recorded projections that were captured by someone and projected from somewhere—for instance a control booth—within some diegetic world.

Time and space cease to be narratively connected. Nikki may move through a passage from one world to another and one screen to another. Temporally, she can move from the present to the past and back again or she can move without time moving along. As she tells her confused male co-star at one point, when her on-screen and off-screen characters start blending, "[i]t's a story that happened yesterday, but I know it's tomorrow". There is no distinguishable yesterday and tomorrow, no precisely localized here and now, there and then. The film instead provides a sense that the audience is being directed, almost at random, to new links on a website and entering yet another world.

By going through the first few minutes of the film,[24] I exemplify in the following in more detail how the structure of multiple screens unfolds:

After the title, the film starts with a black-and-white ultra-close-up and the sound of a gramophone needle gyrating rapidly in the grooves of an analogue gramophone record. On the soundtrack, a male voice announces "Axxon N, the longest-running radio play in history, tonight continuing in the Baltic region, a grey winter day in an old hotel".[25] Thus, from the very start the film draws our attention not only to "medium-specific noise" (Fetveit 2013), but to a particular kind of medium-specific noise: the sound of analogue media. After this follows a complicated layering of black-and-white close-ups of a man and a woman going from a corridor into a room. The woman—a prostitute—takes off her clothes while the customer watches, and they probably have sex. The first shot from the room is a wide and slightly high-angle long shot, which creates a strong sense of surveillance images. However, the two people's faces are blurred digitally, as if this were recorded material and the "original" footage manipulated in order to erase some of the information that surveillance images are meant to provide in the first place. The blurring thus creates a confusing sense of screen doubling, as if the surveillance images were projected from a control room somewhere rather than displayed in real time.

The next scene is in colour. The young girl called the Lost Girl sits on a bed in a room, superimposed in the very first second of the shot with the circular reflection of light from what could be a camera lens. Again, the images create a sense of recording and surveillance. Apart from the first long shot and a medium close-up from the back, we only see the

Lost Girl in ultra-close-ups, crying,[26] while she appears to look at the images on the TV screen on a dresser. The first shots of the screen show flickering static. Then the rabbit sitcom appears fast-forwarded—even though the girl has no remote control in her hand. The enigmatic fast-forwarded images again transmit an impression of some powerful hidden monitoring agency that selects and projects on a monitor from a storage of visual data.[27]

In the next shot, the rabbit tableau is replaced by a slightly distorted fast-forward of the strange woman moving towards Nikki's front door—we will see this footage repeated at normal speed at the beginning of what could be called the plot a few minutes later. In the last second of the very brief shot of the strange woman, the fast-forwarded projection on the television screen fills the entire image frame, and we see the digital pixels superimposed with the room reflected on the screen's surface. There are a few more crosscuts between the Lost Girl and the now-empty flickering screen. Then the flickering images dissolve into the rabbit sitcom, complete with dialogue and laugh track.

The rabbit sitcom alternates with ultra-close-ups of the Lost Girl, so we may assume that it is displayed on the television screen we have just seen. However, the cross-cutting can also be regarded as an example of the hyperlink logic that structures the film, the switching between two open links, side by side, at the same time. In the "sitcom link", a rabbit enters the scene through a side door and turns towards the audience for its applause. Shortly after, he opens the door to leave again, like we have already seen once on the Lost Girl's TV screen. The scale changes mysteriously as the rabbit seems to have gained human size when he enters an opulent mansion's dark salon. When a light is suddenly turned on, the rabbit fades out and is gone. In the ensuing scene in the same room, two men, one of whom is the so-called Phantom, talk in Polish about "looking for something", "looking for an opening" and "looking to go in". Finally, after another shot of the rabbit, who vanishes again from the lavishly decorated room in which the light is now turned off, the narrative about Nikki and the haunted movie begins. The strange woman, whom we have just seen fast-forwarded on the Lost Girl's screen, knocks on Nikki's door.

This blurring of boundaries is omnipresent in the film. Because the example I have described is from the beginning of the film and

therefore lacks narrative anchoring, it seems so confusing. The Lost Girl returns in a longer scene by the end of the film, but this does not make her contribution to the film less mysterious: after Nikki has stepped out of character by the end of the film, risen from the death scene on the Walk of Fame and left the set, she walks into an old-fashioned movie theatre (reminiscent of the black-and-white imitation of a silent cinema projection of a theatre that opens the films on Lynch's YouTube channel), in which she encounters herself displayed in real time on a large screen on the stage. As she walks out of the theatre, she apparently re-enters the world inhabited by the Lost Girl and her television screen, which now seems to have definitely transformed into a monitor displaying real-time surveillance images. After the scene in which Nikki kills the so-called Phantom (either by shooting him or by other means) and in doing so seemingly also kills the dark forces that have kept the prostitutes imprisoned, the next scene unfolds a *mise en abyme* structure: a close-up of the screen shows a long shot of the room. The Lost Girl is sitting on the bed in the right foreground, and the screen in the left background shows the exact same image we are seeing. Nikki enters through an open door in the right background and approaches the girl. Again, the exact movement is mirrored on the screen in the screen. There is a cut from the close-up of the monitor to a long shot of the room, as if an operator in a control room had shifted from one camera to another. The two women embrace, and Nikki kisses her, then she fades away and leaves the Lost Girl with empty hands.

What seemed at the beginning of the film to be a television screen turns out to be a monitor transmitting images from the film's many different scenes/screens. Some of them, for example the recordings of the strange woman and the shots of the room, are obviously surveillance footage. Yet they are surveillance footage of two different kinds—recorded images and real-time projection. The fast-forwarded images seem to be projected by some anonymous operator, who controls the screen from somewhere else and adds to the film's sense of omniscient surveillance. The screen also displays real-time images that apparently originate from a surveillance camera in the room—again: there is no clear enunciation in *Inland Empire* . But we will never know who controls the screen and the concealed recording technology. The close-up of the screen shows Nikki entering the room. In the following

long shot of the room, she is "real", but then she vanishes like a ghost, leaving the young woman with her arms still embracing someone who is no longer there. What has happened? Is Nikki's sudden disappearance an example of a digital event, the manipulation of just a selection of the image's discrete elements? Or is Nikki and the girl's embrace to be understood as a sign of redemption of both women and the end on an optimistic note of a narrative about a woman's (Nikki's) journey towards growth, inner freedom and freedom from the capitalist Hollywood marketplace, as Martha Nochimson (2013) suggests?[28]

Before concluding this chapter, I will briefly go into a surveillance fragment in *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* (1992). In it we see Dale Cooper struggle with the nature of surveillance camera footage. The fragment starts with Cooper drawing Gordon Cole's attention to a date and a time he is worried about "because of the dream I told you about". As I also discuss in the next chapter, the film creates an uncertainty as to whether what we are about see after this remark is his recounting of a dream, and the fragment ends unresolved: the disappeared and returned BFI agent Philip Jeffries who apparently enters the Philadelphia office has been there and yet he has not been there.

For some reason, Cooper stops in the corridor in front of a surveillance camera. There is a cut to a black-and-white close-up of Cooper on the screen and then he goes into the control room where he sees real-time images of the empty corridor. He goes out again, there is another similar black-and-white real-time close-up of Cooper on the screen and a cut to him standing in the corridor in front of the surveillance camera. The third time he makes the same movement, Jeffries has come out of an elevator and is walking along the corridor behind Cooper's back. But before he reaches Cooper, Cooper once more goes into the control room. Apparently, he had not noticed that someone was approaching him—and this time he sees himself looking at the camera—like was he now looking at recorded footage and not real-time footage—and Jeffries walking past him as if he was not there.

Jeffries creates chaos in the otherwise calm office environment, and suddenly he is gone again. No one has seen him enter or leave, but when Cooper shows the surveillance footage to Cole, they take it as proof that he had actually been there. Jeffries starts talking about what has happened to him during the two years he has been missing,

followed by a range of complex superimpositions: flickering static as if from a TV screen, another room with, among others, Bob, Mrs Tremond and her grandson from *Twin Peaks* and The Man From Another Place/The Arm, the Philadelphia office room almost hidden in static seemingly provoked by Jeffries' vivid account, and finally Jeffries' voice recounting that "it was a dream" and that "we live inside a dream"—a sentence later to be repeated by Cooper in *Twin Peaks: The Return* as a reminder of the unhierarchized and fragile levels of intertwined realities that the *Twin Peaks* works are composed of. Like *Inland Empire* , this scene doubles screens and creates split points of view; it may even include dreams—Cooper's and Jeffries'. Because of the flickering static's creation of a sense of screened and projected worlds coming from some mysterious elsewhere (electricity creating passages between worlds), boundaries are blurred between the different spaces, just like boundaries are blurred between dream and reality and between real-time surveillance footage and recorded footage. Just like Monica Bellucci says in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, in a dream, Cole is telling Rosenfield and Tammy about: "We are like the dreamer who lives inside a dream. But who is the dreamer?". In a similar way, who is recording the scene or controls the screens in the Philadelphia office remains untold.[29]

Why Cooper keeps checking the surveillance camera is also a mystery. Maybe he tries to outwit it by being so quick that there is still a trace of him left in the corridor when he looks at the monitor in the control room. Or maybe it is the opposite way round: he may fear that he has a double and needs to be sure that he is whole. All the same, the scene profoundly disturbs the veracity of surveillance footage and insists that it is representational on a par with other screened realities: Cooper's appearance is frozen on a real-time surveillance screen, even though he has left the camera, and another person is recorded by the camera even though he is not observed by the person also captured by the camera. The last part of the scene is an electrified chaos apparently provoked by Jeffries. The first part of the fragment has a comic tone to it, but even though surveillance is neither omniscient nor hidden, in contrast to the complex layers of surveillance in *Inland Empire* it is nonetheless not described as a visual technology that is able to reveal reality as it is. This does not happen in Lynch.

Two Different Digital Works

The two works scrutinized in this chapter embrace digital technology and digital media in very different ways. However, both works experiment with the possibilities of a particular digital technology (*Inland Empire*) and a particular digital genre (the *Interview Project*). *Inland Empire*'s screen aesthetic emphasizes surface and images as digital events, just like the hyperlink structure is in itself a digital event. At the same time, it communicates a fragmented story about the confusion of present, past and future and a woman who, at once frightened and determined, wanders in and out of (screen) worlds. By contrast, the *Interview Project* uses a website and the documentation of a road trip to create an intermedia documentary real, the veracity of which is strengthened because the website at once describes how the films came into being and distributes them. Both works are newer kinds of film forms, an intermedia i-doc and a post-cinematic fiction film in the form of a digital composite. But whereas *Inland Empire* is introvert, so to speak, and stages the dissolution and recomposing of subjectivity, the i-doc *Interview Project* is extrovert and offers a multitude of documentary portraits.

Inland Empire is a work of digital film art, marked strongly by Lynch's experiments with the PD-150 camera and the aesthetic possibilities in this camera's lack of technological sophistication. *Inland Empire* meditates on what could be called a new condition of the mediated real: the lack of differentiation between the screening of the world and the screened world , the substitution of single for multiple overlapping perspectives in the post-perspectival era. It also makes a case for new tools of cultural navigation and other perceptual capabilities. Finally, it describes subjectivity as an ephemeral, unstable condition. The *Interview Project* , on the other hand, uses a website, an Internet genre well known to Lynch, to create a new intermedia form of documentary. It uses the digital genre to produce, archive and make it possible for the user to browse among an extended number of short portraits, and thereby, as Lynch formulated it, to "get to know these people". The *Interview Project* adds to the expanding new field of web documentaries by the blurring of boundaries between different media —much as Lynch has done throughout his career ever since *Three Men Getting Sick*.

Rendered possible by the team that travelled across the US, met with people and made the films for the *Interview Project* , David Lynch uses the web to look into the ways the passing of time leaves its marks on people and things. The road trip is presented as a journey progressing over a limited period of time. Simultaneously, the site's affordances make it possible for the viewers to deconstruct the journey's unfolding in time and across adjacent spaces and watch the documentaries in random order. Moreover, the site itself challenges notions of coherence and continuity by its recurrent emphasis on chance meetings.

The construction of a digital uncanny in *Inland Empire* resides in the radically fragmented structure and the dissolution of time and space. *Inland Empire* is a thrillingly enigmatic and frightening vision of a multilayered world of screened realities, in which perspective changes constantly, in which space is unsettled and time folds in upon itself. *Inland Empire* accords well with what Mactaggart (2010) calls the "technological uncanny". But maybe it more precisely exudes a sense of *digital uncanny* to borrow Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli's term (2019). As in many other Lynch works, the construction of worlds to enter and the suspension of temporal and spatial hierarchies and perspectives are accompanied by uneasiness and an uncanny sense of lost control—for the main character and for the viewers. *Inland Empire* is a film without a clearly demarcated hypotext in Genette's (1997 [1982]) understanding of the term. At one point in the film, the director tells the lead characters that the film they are making is a remake of a never finished Polish film. "Something happened before the film was finished […] They discovered something inside the story." This is precisely not the point with *Inland Empire* . It has no "inside". It is radically unhierarchized, "horizontal", without closure or final truth. However, both works use the affordances of digital technology to challenge the boundaries of well-known audio-visual forms.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_5

5. David Lynch and Visual Noise

Anne Jerslev[1]
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anne Jerslev
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

I always say I like bad quality, though I don't know exactly what I mean by that.
—David Lynch to Mike Figgis 2007, in Nieland (2010 : 169)
The reason that you are experimenting is so that you don't leave a golden possibility uncaptured.
—Lynch interviewed by Barney (2009 [2001])

David Lynch has always been fascinated with the non-specific, the opaque and blurred. It enables the viewers to go wandering and add to the images their own imagination of what hides behind the opaque surfaces. In Chris Rodley's interview book, Lynch observes about colour that "[c]olour to me is too real. It's limiting. It doesn't allow too much of a dream" (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 20), just like he said about the darkness in his paintings, which I quoted in the second chapter (p. 54), "Black has depth" [...] "The more you throw black into a colour, the more dreamy it gets. I could try one tube of cadmium yellow to 500 tubes of black. That could be one way to use it" (ibid.).

The non-transparency of the image, the almost tactile feeling of the thick density of the dark so prominent in Lynch's films, adds to the images a both fascinated and frightened feeling of being immersed in another world. Just like the scene in the first part of *Lost Highway* from

Fred and Renee's home, I discussed in Chap. 2 in which Fred, in his black dress, almost like a sleepwalker, slides along a dark corridor and seems to dissolve in the dark, as if the black depth as a kind of breathing organism had engulfed him. The dark opacity almost acquires a life of its own, not least due to the construction of the Madison couple's home as a strangely dissonant and unfamiliar space. It draws the viewers close into being absorbed in its spatial unboundedness too, at once attracted to and frightened of what is *in there*, in the depth of darkness, as Lynch said in an interview: "Darkness to me is a mystery. I don't know what's there and that's what draws me there. It's not necessarily evil, although that would exist there" (Hewitt 2009 [1986]: 30). Darkness is constituted as an unknown space and textured surface at one and the same time.

Darkness is not the only means of blocking vision and creating a sense of tactile opaqueness in Lynch. In the previous chapter I quoted his praise of the grainy quality of the digital Sony PD-150's images for their ability to make the mind "go dreaming". Digital equipment (and particularly an old-fashioned digital camera such as the PD-150) provided Lynch with new smart, less time-consuming tools for expanding on his aesthetics of *the cinematic obscure* and *texture*, which we find everywhere in Lynch's works and which I discussed at length in this book's Chap. 3: the transformation of the transparent images into abstract textures which at once appear as surfaces and procure a feeling of being immersed into an unbounded non-signifying spatiality, or what Lynch himself characterizes as "diving" "into other worlds".

In particular, the PD-150's medium specificity, or as Mactaggart would have it its "weaknesses", renders a distinctive blurring of boundaries that Lynch's images explore for their ability to create a kind of image that I in this chapter, inspired by Nechvatal (2011), will explore as *visual noise*. Visual noise is an aesthetic term that includes aesthetic abstractions, warped images and aesthetic renderings of the non-signifying in the form of blurring , distortion, disruption, layers of superimpositions, and over- and underexposure. Moreover, it encompasses the non-transparency of the image and the ubiquitous, dissonant and slightly asynchronous relationship between sound and images. In this chapter, I follow up on the preceding chapter's emphasis on the PD-150's particular aesthetic qualities by discussing digitally

produced blurring of boundaries or *visual noise* of various kinds in some of Lynch's shorter PD-150 works.

I reserve the term visual noise for particular kinds of visuality in Lynch, which oppose the transparency attached to the traditional film image. Importantly, though, visual noise may in this chapter also include aural noise. Moreover, to make it clear from the very beginning, my understanding of visual noise does not include "symptoms of wear and tear and errors or malfunctions" which is Arild Fetveit's (2013: 189) way of understanding the aesthetics of what he calls "medium-specific noise". What Fetveit assesses as a less radical aesthetics I see as actually radical—"pressing media beyond their calculated ranges of operation" (Fetveit 2013: 189). In Lynch's experiments with the camera's affordances and constraints, I see an effort to create immersive atmospheres that affect the viewing body much more radically than transparent film language.

In this chapter, I refer in particular to two works on sound and (visual) noise by sound scholar Salomé Voegelin (2010) and art historian and artist Joseph Nechvatal (2011), which both include suggestive discussions about the ways sound and noise affect perception, create a sense of immersion and challenge the stable and homogenous. Even though Voegelin's book is about auditory senses, I use her points in my discussion on (audio)visual noise too. Additionally, I draw briefly on works by Laura U. Marks (2000, 2002). Despite approaching the issue of blurred, tactile imagery from a different angle, she thinks along similar lines to Nechvatal and Voegelin regarding the blurring of boundaries that epitomizes (visual) noise.

Salomé Voegelin argues that it is not possible to choose a position of distance towards noise: "Noise ingests me and yet it is only noise because it works on my body" (2010: 48). The works by the two authors can thus help in understanding visual noise in Lynch's PD-150 works, how it produces a "sonic sensibility" (Voegelin xiii). Modernist art theory would call noise "unclean sound" but the two authors regard noise from a more productive point of view of the possibilities of challenging cultural positions through the destabilizing and heterogeneous. Voegelin's and Nechvatal's thoughts on noise (and sound) can inspire the analysis of the ways visual noise is made to eliminate distance and catch the perceiving body in the grip of noise.

Visual noise creates immersive atmospheres. Lynch's experiments with the simple PD-150 contribute to creating a renewed "aesthetic of cinematic dreaming" (Mactaggart 2010: 142). By means of digital blurring and distortions, visual noise creates characters and spaces that are there and not there at one and the same time, opaque and transparent, familiar and yet unfamiliar.

The PD-150 works that I take up in this chapter are of two different kinds. First, they encompass audio-visual *experiments* in different formats and genres. *Inland Empire* is the most complex, but here I go into short experiments like *Boat* (2007), *Industrial Soundscape* (2008) and the so-called *Intervalometer Experiments* (2004) (experiments with time lapse photography)—collected together with *Boat* and *Industrial Soundscape* and other shorts on the *Dynamic :01* DVD. Since the launching of his YouTube Channel, *David Lynch Theater*, a whole range of other short works are being uploaded continuously (see pages 104–105), often in series in different intervals. However, in this chapter I concentrate on some of the earlier digital experiments carried out for the website with the unsophisticated cameras, about which Lynch was "at first thinking they were just like little toys, and they were not very good. But then I started realizing that they're very, very good—for me, at least" (Lynch 2006: 149).

Second, I discuss some of Lynch's commercials. Over the years, since the late 1980s, he has made a great many commercials for different luxury brands such as Armani, Gucci, Calvin Klein and Christian Louboutin, for car manufacturers like Honda, Citroen and Nissan (the Nissan ad featuring a large blue floating pair of lips), PlayStation 2 and Japanese tinned coffee producer Georgia (four commercials featuring Dale Cooper, other *Twin Peaks* characters, familiar *Twin Peaks* spaces and a mystery of a disappeared woman). However, Lynch also made public service announcements, including an ad for a pregnancy test—among others.[1] Many of these commercials are closer to surrealism and an avant-garde aesthetic (the Nissan ad, for example) than a popular culture aesthetic. Or they are blurring boundaries between the avant-garde and the popular in order to communicate in more indirect, less demonstrative ways. The same goes for Lynch's Dior commercial, the 15-minutes-long *Lady Blue Shanghai* from 2010, which I analyse in more detail later on by suggesting two related aesthetic strategies of

creating visual noise in the "film": *digital distortions* and *digital blurring*.

In the last part of the chapter, I take a couple of Lynch's music videos as examples of ways of procuring visual noise (one of them is not filmed with the PD-150, though). Lynch has primarily made music videos for his own music (in collaboration with a range of different musicians) and for other musicians' music used in his films back to his clip for Chris Isaak's *Wicked Game*, released as extra material with the VHS version of *Wild at Heart*[2] and for Rammstein (for the *Lost Highway* soundtrack). I go into two videos for Lynch's own music, the *Crazy Clown Time* video (2011) released with the debut album from 2011 and *I Have a Radio* made for a bonus track for the *Crazy Clown Time* album and released on the *David Lynch Theater* YouTube channel in 2020. However, first I elaborate on the term *visual noise*.

Visual Noise

"Acoustically, noise is a mess," says Meredith Ward (2019: 9). Noise may be regarded as a sign of imperfection or disturbance of a meaningful unit; therefore, noise has been regarded as a judgmental word (Ward 2019). Noise is the undifferentiated, what is beyond signification and evades meaning: "noise is not acceptable sound, not music, not valid, not a message or a meaning" (Hegarty 2007: 5). However, what is regarded as noise may change historically and the nature of noise is contextually determined (Hainge 2012). As Ward says, noise is defined by what it is not—which, however, also makes noise hard to define. Noise is a fluid category "and may be filled with whatever concerns animate the moment" (Ward 2019: 9; see also Hainge 2012, "Introduction"). Noise pertains to elements that cause disturbance in other elements; as such, noise disrupts or obscures the perception of something (Fetveit 2013). Noise results in what Dudley Andrew in another context has called "uncertain images" (2000: 13), images that by different means prevent us from seeing what we were "supposed" to see in them or had expected to see. Uncertain images are images in which referentiality is blurred; instead, they encourage a contemplation of what *is* there, texture, the tactile surface (as discussed in Chap. 3) but also the sense of something behind the surface. So, as it appears from

these short accounts, *noise* is not only auditory. It addresses both the visual and the sonic, just as the term *visual noise* I propose in this chapter includes the aural.

As I began by saying, of the large body of works about sound and noise I have primarily been inspired by two books about (visual) noise by Joseph Nechvatal (2011) and Salomé Voegelin (2010), who both regard noise as a boundary challenging force in its own right. However, neither author offers one single definition of noise; as Voegelin puts it, "[n]oise is not a special case, it is simply more insistent in its sonic particularity" (2010: 52). Even though Voegelin scrutinizes noise as a *sonic* thing, her reflections can be applied to constructions of visual noise in Lynch as well.

Voegelin's discussion of sound art and sonic sensibilities centres on what sound-turned-noise does to the senses: noise abolishes distance and works immersively on the body. Noise fragments in contrast to the visual but it also augments the visual. Finally, noise is destabilizing and heterogeneous. Hence, noise dissolves meaning and therefore has different affordances to the visual. Moreover, Voegelin emphasizes that noise is able to create its own world of uncertainty and contingency.

Nechvatal's reflections upon noise music, art noise and immersion into noise[3] are inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) idea of the rhizome as a figure that metaphorizes the fundamentally heterogeneous, non-hierarchical and discontinuous. Nechvatal discusses noise as an oppositional aesthetic practice and, in the broadest sense, as "*a saturating border experience*" (2011: 16—italics in original), which encompasses the visual as well as the auditory. Nechvatal draws more attention to *visual* noise than Voegelin. However, it goes for both authors that sound is not regarded as an attribute or anchor to the visual but a thing in itself, as Voegelin puts it: "[B]y sonic thing-ness we grasp the complexity of the object rather than list its attributes or purposes, and we grasp it in its particular and contingent doing not as a relational being" (2010: 20). This observation applies exactly to Lynch: noise evades being subsumed to the visual and "being chased away by the certainty of the image", as Voegelin puts it (2010: xii).

Noise ruptures and renders unstable; "noise disturbs order" (Voegelin 2011: 218). Noise sabotages psychological harmony (ibid.:

36) and disturbs our sense of equilibrium because it is undifferentiated and surrounding. To both authors, sound and noise are immersive aesthetic practices, which have a visceral quality (Voegelin talks about the "immersive grip of noise" (2010: 49)). However, to Voegelin—and to a certain extent also to Nechvatal—noise is not qualitatively different from other sounds, apart from its insistence and power over the senses. Its grip on the body excludes all other sensations and, as Voegelin puts it, "swallows me" (ibid.: 47): "Noise ingests me and yet it is only noise because it works on my body" (ibid.: 48).

To Nechvatal, noise is in a broad sense characteristic of an overloaded information culture. In that respect, he regards all sound and image as inherently noisy and claims that in a digital society, "all sounds and images are already a kind of noise, data without meaning" (2011: 14). Nevertheless, noise is the radically different to both Voegelin and Nechvatal. Nechvatal says that "for noise to be first noise it must *destabilize* us (2011: 19—italics in original), whereas Voegelin emphasizes that "[n]oise can only find its way to language in the acknowledgement that it can't" (2010: 65). The intensity in noise is the boundary-disturbing force in the two authors' noise aesthetics; as Nechvatal says, noise "removes us out of our quiet and glib indolence and points us in the potent direction of expanding thunderous intensity" (ibid.: 211).

The two writers' understanding of noise prove useful to think through Lynch's blurred boundaries and the immersive noise aesthetics in the chosen works. Additionally, I recall Gernot Böhme's thoughts about atmosphere and immersion, which I outlined in Chap. 2. Like Nechvatal, Böhme uses the term "enveloping" for the feeling of being immersed in a felt space. Böhme also emphasizes the distinctive quality of noise, that it does not refer to or express anything definite: "Acoustic spaces are something in themselves," he notes (2018 [2013]: 133). Because noise is without innate meaning and expresses nothing in particular, it can easily be detached from any context and fill a new space. Noises and other acoustic phenomena create atmospheres by being "separated from their origins … and fill space and wander through it almost like things" (ibid.). This seems very much in tune with what David Lynch is doing in his short, experimental works. By filling his spaces with sounds and noise he creates atmospheres, which

acquire a materiality, a “thing-ness” of their own. The disorienting, blurry, often abstract images contribute with the sound to the creation of the noise works I discuss in this chapter.

Visual Noise: Short Experimental Films

The short films I take up experiment in different ways with time and light and with the crossing of boundaries between realism and dreamy scenarios. *Industrial Soundscape* (2008) uses a fixed camera and experiments with remediation through digital manipulation. The *Intervalometer Experiments* (2004–2007) use a steady camera and time lapse software in order to capture changes in light and shadow and changes of atmosphere in an environment. *Boat* (2007), for its part, experiments in particular with brightness. Visual noise comes from overexposure and the graininess brought about by underexposure in this work. Despite their short formats, the shorts also experiment with the dissolution of continuous time, which has occupied Lynch ever since his very first work. *Industrial Soundscape* abolishes temporal progression by means of its excessive repetitive structure. *Boat* creates a narrative in which the speed of a boat and temporal acceleration are made to coexist, and finally, the time lapse experiments use software to speed up temporal progression.

In the introduction to *Industrial Soundscape* on the *Dynamic : 01* DVD, Lynch touches on two of the issues that have continuously occupied him, namely abandoned factory areas and digital technology. These interests are brought together in this short black-and-white experimental film (lasting around 10 minutes), in which the same movements and noises are repeated monotonously again and again in front of a static camera (Illustration 5.1). The film shows the repetitive lateral and horizontal movements of two heavy metal pipes of different sizes. One hits a metal scaffolding, the other hits the large flat concrete plate on which its support stands with great force. Static lights up in the background together with distant thunder each time the heavy pipe hits the concrete plate. The movements are rhythmical and so is the noise coming from the clashes of hard material. The electrified inner of a seemingly organic substance lights up briefly at the same pace as the horizontal pipe hits the metal, and two flashes of light appear, one after

the other, just before the horizontal pipe moves. The glimpse of light is accompanied with noise, which sounds like it is coming from a pair of whiskers on a drum. Finally, in the foreground looms another amorphous mass of seemingly organic matter. In summary, the spatial atmosphere is created by the repetition of short bursts of crackling electric discharges and the two heavy pipes, which move and make noise when they hit another hard surface. Additionally, a constant underlying noise of shifting intensity accompanying the rhythmic sounds contributes to this felt atmosphere.

Illustration 5.1 Framegrab from *Industrial Soundscape*

Just like it has so often—including in this book—been quoted how Lynch early in his career wanted his paintings to move, he experimented with making a photo move in *Industrial Soundscape*. *Industrial Soundscape* is a moving photograph, as it were, that blurs boundaries between still photography and moving images, between documentary real and fantasy. The 10-minutes-long work took its point of departure from a photo taken by Lynch as part of a series of pictures of an abandoned industrial area in Los Angeles called “The Tanks” just

before the area was to be demolished (an early scene from *Eraserhead* of Henry walking through it had been shot there many years earlier).[4] The photo is manipulated digitally and parts of it are then animated. As Lynch says in the introduction to the work on *Dynamic : 01*, "with After Effects and Photoshop, I took everything apart and made things move to a beat and did a music thing to it, as an experiment".

The short introduction includes black-and-white close-ups of details of Lynch's photos of the tanks, which are reminiscent of his other factory photographs. Lynch's voice-over recalls that the (oil) tanks had "giant bolts, beautiful steel, and shapes and hoses and just these fantastic great valves and all locked in time. It's aged so beautifully". Again, what fascinated Lynch was capturing processes of ageing in the large and small details of industrial machinery and showing in the medium of photography how this creates a unique atmosphere of otherness. As for his experimental work on the photo, documentary realism, the atmosphere of decomposition and the working of time on a space and its things, has been replaced by a timeless, decontextualized industrial dreamscape. In this altered vision, repetitive, simple movements, high sounds and flashes of light create a reverberating hallucinatory nowhere, reminiscent of the vanished temporal logic of industrial capitalism. There are no palimpsestuous cracks to this imagery, and no atmosphere of people having once worked here. If one had not seen the introduction to the work,[5] one would not know that this is a digitally produced remediation of a documentation of a bygone industrial workplace.

Industrial Soundscape is both minimalist and excessive in its repetition of the exact same sounds and movements during its duration of approximately 10 minutes. There is no beginning and no end to the film, just the same unstoppable movements and the same noises seemingly ad infinitum. Paradoxically, the transformation of the original realist photograph into this slightly surreal environment created by sound and moving images enhances the feeling of being immersed in a world, similarly to what Lynch describes in the introduction on the DVD when he recalls how he experienced the area with the large oil tanks:

> It was surrounded by a very high doughnut of earth [...] You had to walk over this mound that surrounded it and then you're

> down in it. And down in it you couldn't see anything outside of it. So, it's a complete world. It was so beautiful.

However, the digital experiment has transported the tanks into a completely different world, more abstract, more seductively immersive and devoid of realism. The photo's early evening light is transformed into blackness, its detailed background realism transformed into an opaque darkness and the deserted immobility replaced by the digitally inserted movements of the heavy pipes and the glimpses of electricity. These movements add to the space a feeling of the unstoppable. Likewise, the object is reminiscent of a perpetuum mobile installation activated by some displaced, non-human agency that applies to the surrounding atmosphere a sense of uncanniness. The endless repetitions of movement and noise just finish abruptly, at random, when the film stops. It nevertheless leaves an impression of the unstoppable. It could go on forever like an "eternally repetitive mechanical machine" that follows its own "logic of the infinite" (Nechvatal 2011: 211). The work at one and the same time creates an insistent duration and the dissolution of time. Because there is no difference, repetition in a sense disintegrates in its uncanny mechanical sameness resembling what Freud (1919) calls "involuntary repetition" in his text about the uncanny (*das Unheimliche*), to which I shall return in Chap. 7. Time implodes and space turns unfamiliar. As such, *Industrial Soundscape* adds another example to the Lynchian heterotopias I discussed in Chap. 3.

Only the off-screen noise—what Lynch himself characterized as a "music thing"—changes a bit during the 10 minutes, yet without any distinct rhythmic pattern. It emphasizes the unsettling unstoppability of this industrial perpetuum mobile; as Voegelin reminds us, "[t]he spectre of sound unsettles the idea of visual stability and involves us as listeners in the production of an invisible world" (2010: 67). So, I suggest that what I, following Nechvatal, would call the "noise of immersive darkness " in this work created by experimenting with obscuring the original documentary photograph's realism in a paradoxical way brings about a subjectively imagined resurgence of the area: the work recreates a feeling of being immersed and locked in time in a world apart, which Lynch describes but which the realist photo of

the area does not provide as forcefully. The sonic noise in the work, diegetic as well as non-diegetic, enhances the feeling of a secluded and decontextualized environment ruled by its own inevitable and somewhat uncanny logic.

While Lynch experimented with digital image manipulation techniques in *Industrial Soundscape* and created an immersive noise vision in the words of Nechvatal (2011), the little over 7-minutes-long *Boat* is an experiment with the PD-150 camera's (poor) image resolution. In this work, visual noise is created by means of an *aesthetics of overexposure* , which erases many of the objects in the image and often transforms it into a minimalist abstraction. The short film differs from most of Lynch's other works by being very bright until the last part. It is overexposed to the extent that the represented objects at times dissolve into pure brightness.

Nechvatal claims that "[i]ssues of light are issues of clarity and obscurity" (2011: 67). *Boat* can be regarded as a study of the opacity of brightness, an experiment with clarity and obscurity, with surface and (lack of) depth. The experiment examines whether brightness can create the same effect as darkness: whether brightness has depth, whether objects engulfed or erased by brightness can be perceived as still being (in) there, and whether the lack of colour in brightness invites the viewer to go into it—just like blackness does.David Lynch says in the intro to the film on the DVD that it started out as "one of those family videos":

> Somehow, I got the idea that this would be a trip into night and then it kind of got more of a story going, and then Emily Stofle … I wrote a voice-over and that sort of put it in another place; it was an ongoing experiment.

The film starts, very unusually for a Lynch work, with a vertical camera pan into green leaves in treetops and the white bright sky. The female voice-over repeats in a dreamy whispering tone of voice, "It was so bright. I couldn't sleep. I couldn't see. I didn't know where I was", and she adds, "when things go wrong it gets like this".[6] The voice-over continues to recount what she can only see with difficulty, strange details, she says, of water and a boat going into the water and beginning

to move, with someone in it. The bright, overexposed images exude an atmosphere of a hot summer day, but also of a vanishing reality: a half-awake recounting of a dream of a place so bright that it is almost not there, and of being moved elsewhere without moving. The woman refers to things that go wrong. Yet, the overexposed images of the clean and shining brown boat at anchor with the shimmering of light in the glistening green water under a white canopy more likely create a sense of half-real beauty.

The visual noise aesthetic continues when we see David Lynch turn the wheel simultaneously with the woman recounting from her dream that there was someone in the boat. The following overexposed long shots show the boat turn away from the landing and the shore in the background changing into a vague green-white shadow. Likewise, the water, the sky and the spray from the boat combine to create a white, just slightly transparent surface. Before everything disappears, David Lynch addresses the viewer in a bright and blurry close-up of his almost fading face. Or maybe he addresses another person in the boat close to him who holds the camera—just like in an amateur "family video". No matter who, he says with a smile: "We're trying to go fast enough to go into the night."

While the woman's whispering voice says that she was moving, that she could see drops of water and it was very bright, the image turns into a quickly moving abstraction of skewed green and white lines, opaque whiteness with some blue in it, and the blurry lines of the boat's American flag superimposed with the quickly moving whiteness and the green stripes. Finally, the brightness is replaced by a patterned blackness of water with spots of whiteness from the moonlight reflecting in the moving water, as we are told by the female voice-over. Furthermore, she also says that "all of a sudden, it was dark. I was moving very fast"—like she was on the boat. The final one and a half minute of the film is almost without diegetic sound except for the sound of the wind in the American flag in the stern. These images are heavily underexposed, and because darkness accentuates the PD-150's grainy pixellation, the abstractions become more tactile. Underexposure makes heavily textured and blurred images: of the boat, the flag and the water in the dim darkness, intercut with dark medium close-ups of Lynch by the wheel, looking at the night into which he speeds.

By the end of the short film, the voice-over says that she "heard the man say something". At this point, she addresses a "you"—"and I wanted to tell you that I dreamed of you". Before she whispers the last part of the sentence, there is a cut to a medium close-up of Lynch by the wheel, his appearance almost being swallowed up by the darkness. He turns his head towards the camera and whispers: "It worked." Then his image fades away superimposed with an image of the full moon, which the hand-held camera and the boat's fast movements make bounce vehemently against the background of the glittering black water. Lynch's remark refers to the fulfilment of his wish to "go fast enough to go into the night". In a way, then, *Boat* is a fantasy about time lapse, about breaking free of the constraints of time, not only mechanically, in a camera, but in reality. It is also a fantasy about boundless space: a female voice-over talking from some undefined dream space—maybe she is floating in air and looking at the boat that traverses unlimited space at high speed.

Boat experiments with almost all the different ways of making visual noise through image blurring I mentioned above: aesthetic abstractions, distortions, layers of superimpositions, and extreme over- and underexposure of the image. Evidently, all these strategies obscure the objects that the camera is directed at. However, this work is particularly examining how image blurring can be procured. *Boat* is a study of different aspects of light on surfaces—glittering, shimmering, luminescent—and whiteness. And to conclude, brightness seems to be able to obscure and make appear just like blackness.[7]

Boat is truly an immersive noise vision, which simultaneously accentuates surface and texture. It experiments with ways in which not only vision but also the image's referentiality can be blocked—and questioned. Indeed, light obscures instead of making transparent in the work. Mostly there are shadowed or opaque patterns in the brightness, just like there are traces of colours in Lynch's darkness. Together with the underexposed images that bring forth the digital image's pixelated texture and the whispering voice-over that seems to come from elsewhere, the dreamy opaque atmosphere in the work is strongly felt. The sound of the female voice-over is ghost-like, disembodied and displaced. She may be far away, in a dream. Yet, this could also be the inner voice of the one holding the camera on the boat and therefore be

the one Lynch himself addresses. The visual may be her dream. By the end of the film, she is talking to someone close by, to a "you", who might, in reverse, just like in a home movie, talk to her. Truly, the spectre of sound unsettles the idea of visual stability, as Voegelin says.

As I wrote above, in one of the grainy underexposed images, Lynch addresses the camera and says that he managed, by accelerating the speed of the boat, to bring it into the night, as if night was a fixed geographical destination and not a temporal dimension of day and night, caused by the rotation of the earth around its own axis. This logic on the part of Lynch blocks any idea of homogeneous and continuous time. Put in another way: it appears as if Lynch transformed time lapse from a doing by means of technological software to a real possibility, the narrative illusion of which he coquettishly wanted us to accept. In *Boat* , night is a destination, a magical, almost soundless space, and time can be sped up at will.

The *Intervalometer Experiments* (2004) also creates a feeling of speeding up time but does so by means of a particular technology. In time lapse photography, frames are captured with larger intervals than usual, and when played at normal speed, time speeds up and makes objects transform very quickly—for example, a flower growing and unfolding its petals in the course of a minute or so. The *Dynamic: 01* DVD includes three time lapse experiments: *Sunset # 1* (in a canyon), *Steps* (black-and-white images of the changed look of an outdoor staircase leaning on a wall) and *Interior Dining Room* (a view out of the windows in a corner of a room). Through these experiments, Lynch wanted to see how "magical things can happen" to our ordinary views with "magnification as time is sped up"—for example, with the changes of light—as he says in the introduction to the works on the DVD.

Simultaneously, the *Intervalometer Experiments* invites immersion *and* reflection. The experiments challenge our everyday perception and show how even a corner of a brown table or lilac flowers are never just brown and lilac but change colour continuously. Surfaces constantly change into new surfaces, colours and structures with each change of light. Time lapse photography thereby draws attention to the relationship between images and the anchoring of images by words. Words may anchor the visual (in Barthes' understanding of the term), but words cannot keep pace with the changes of, for example, colour on

the same spot and the way the spot changes. The three works create spectacles out of the ordinary—impossible sights were it not for the affordance of digital technology. At the same time, they show the change of light in ordinary contexts, which makes these contexts real and surreal at one and the same time. This challenge to perception is in a paradoxical way accentuated by the fixed camera and, moreover, by the disturbance created by the noise. Noise accompanies all three works. Since noise "avoids classification and focuses on being heard rather than being understood", to quote Voegelin (2010: 54), it strengthens the defamiliarization of the perception of space that time lapse creates. Undifferentiated noise widens space. It creates a meaningless, hence disturbing, externality to the viewed environment. Despite the poetic changes of light and colour, works like *Interior Dining Room* and *Sunset # 1* points at a more general instability. Even though a corner of the world is the same, it is embedded within and affected by an ever-changing environment.

The strange world emanating from the use of time lapse camera technology is most pronounced in the black-and-white work *Steps* (approximately 3½ minutes), which starts with showing a staircase (on Lynch's house apparently) flooded in light and ends with the same staircase now lying in shadow. The intervalometer experiment opens with a very clear, geometrical and minimalist image of an outdoor staircase of stone or concrete attached to the side of a concrete or stone wall. Were it not for the attendant noise that creates an outside or what Deleuze (1991 [1983]) would call an "out of field" to the space, the image appears almost like a black-and-white drawing, a two-dimensional geometrical figuration divided diagonally in two with the staircase placed right between the black and the all-white triangle. The upper triangle is black as the wall is lying in the shadow; the lower triangle, the courtyard, is blindingly white. The steps are also white whereas the side of the staircase is dark.

Slowly movement invades this seemingly fixed geometry. It starts with a tiny streak of blackness creeping into the tip of white to the right. With an air of inevitability, the black shadow of a tree's branches and leaves and also a more impenetrable blackness glide across the white space. Simultaneously the noise changes. It sounds higher and darker, and its tone alters from something reminiscent of urban noise

to a more threatening rumble. As the shadow steadily darkens, more and more of the courtyard and the side of the stairs, by contrast, turns white, and the darkness seems to climb the stairs. It looks like some ghostly creature has escaped whose magnitude and loud roaring cover the space and transform it. This dramatic occurrence reminds us not only of Voegelin's claim that "[n]oise is formless, yet spatial" (2010: 67). Noise also has a material side to it. *Steps* is an experiment with light but also with the power of noise to grip the body and create a feeling of being immersed in a space, in which we do not really know what happens.

Visual noise is not reserved for Lynch's stand-alone short films, a couple of which have an almost private character. Some of his commercials include the same playful experiments with the dissolution of the representational aspect of the photographic image and the combination of the representational and the abstract in a short narrative. One such example is the *Lady Blue Shanghai* commercial for Dior.

Visual Noise in *Lady Blue Shanghai*

David Lynch and Commercials

In a 2008 video interview recorded for the *Manufacturing Intellect* YouTube channel, Lynch said smilingly in front of an audience: "I sometimes do commercials to make money." The audience applauded loudly after this remark; however, Lynch added: "But I always say: Every time I learn something: Efficiency of saying something and new technologies" (see also Rodley 2005 [1997]: 211–212).[8] Here, the auteur clearly, although indirectly, disputed the possibility of being creative for commercial intentions. Yet, at the same time he expressed that even creating something for commercial reasons can boost creativity—for example, by giving access to explore and play with new technology's affordances and constraints.

I concur with Antony Todd (2012) who criticizes the lack of scholarly interest in Lynch's commercials. I also agree with Todd's critique of the understanding, which also pops up in Lynch himself,[9] that an artist should not soil his artistic integrity by making commercials, unless the goal is to provide the means to secure artistic

freedom to make his “real” works. In the case of Lynch, making commercials is undoubtedly a playground and an audio-visual laboratory for trying out new aesthetic possibilities that may then be refined or changed for other contexts. And, in contrast, Lynch has managed to incorporate iconic elements from his back catalogue of themes, noises , atmospheres, characters and props in the ads and in that respect provided them with the stamp “Brand Lynch” (Todd 2012). This goes, for example, for the black-and-white PlayStation 2 commercial, commissioned by Sony in 2000 and shot on Sony’s PD-150. The ad was based on the concept that PlayStation 2 could create a passage to another world called “The Third Place” (Dom 2014; Malkinson 2016). Besides this story, the commercial is a veritable catalogue of Lynch visuals (smoke, a corridor, fire, old-fashioned sound amplifiers from which come distorted words), which during its 60 seconds creates a fragmented and extremely distorted visual and auditory space. Gravitation does not apply, and in the middle of the space is a bewildered man whose head at one point leaves his body (like in the *My Head is Disconnected* black-and-white painting from 1994) and floats toward the viewer. The man gives and receives a thumbs-up from a double (maybe with a reference to Cooper’s signature sign in *Twin Peaks*) and appears shortly as his doubled mirror image from the smoky clouds. The man ends up looking at himself again, sitting on a sofa together with a person completely enveloped in gauze and a duck dressed in a suit who utters the words: “Welcome to the third place.” The commercial appears excessively fragmented and completely Lynchian. It is a true digital event, to use Rodowick’s (2007) term: the digital splitting up and randomly reassembling of image data.

Complying with rules when making a work of art is not new to Lynch and restrictions do not have to be obstacles to artistic freedom. Obeying the demands of a commissioner is not reserved for commercial brands and obeying rules has not prevented “ideas” from floating and developing in Lynch’s creative mind. The short film *Absurda/ Scissors* was made by invitation for the Cannes 2007 60th anniversary. In a similar vein to the 1995 project *Lumière et Compagnie* (celebrating cinema’s 100th anniversary), in which Lynch also participated, he was invited, together with 34 other directors, to make a short film, which

was screened in a special programme called “Chacun son Cinéma”. Among the invited directors were Wim Wenders, Jane Campion, Theodore Angelopoulos, Wong Kar Wai, Bille August, Michael Cimino and Lars von Trier—the last of these had made obeyance to (the 10 Dogme) rules his trademark creative principle. According to *Lynchland*, the film-makers were invited to express “their state of mind of the moment as inspired by the motion picture theatre”. They were to obey a time limit of three minutes and to include a cinema theatre in the film.[10]

My point is that there is no fundamental difference between commercials and other works in Lynch’s production. One genre is not necessarily more artistic or original than another. What I do in this book is to regard Lynch’s work as a continuously evolving disparate whole, a hybrid multimedia and intermedia work that is continuously expanding. Or put a bit differently, a living total work that is continuously in the process of becoming. As a total intermedia work, David Lynch’s work is made up of a range of larger and smaller, shorter and longer fragments formed in a diversity of genres, media and materials, which all speak to each other in different ways. From this perspective, a discussion about Lynch’s commercials as merely expressions of an “aesthetics of the brand” in contrast to a proper “aesthetics of the signature” (Frow 2002) makes no sense. It ignores the fact that marketing and branding are inherent in both regimes.[11] So, I also agree with Todd’s argument that branding is not merely reserved for commercial enterprises. As he says, auteurism is also about selling (Todd 2012: 121). Lynch’s cool “post-classical auteur” signature (Todd 2012) has for years been the well-known buttoned-up white (or black) shirt,[12] the trendy haircut, the fluttering with his fingers when he talks, the way he does not answer questions about the meaning of his works—“What I can say is what you see—what you see is what I can say. And the works—they’re there and they speak for themselves”.[13] This self-branding has contributed to the branding of Lynch’s works (of all kinds) as equally cool. David Lynch’s works are something one should definitely know if one considers oneself at the forefront of contemporary art and popular culture.

As I see it, Lynch creates commercials because contemporary high-end commercials are not, to put it very generally, aesthetically far from

Lynch's way of thinking and experimenting with images and sound. Contemporary commercials often refrain from communicating their obvious message directly. They are more eager to create a certain atmosphere, more occupied with making what Anderson (2009, 2014) calls "collective affects" than pointing directly at a product. The logic of contemporary ad communication is to create a mystery or even affect the body with an uncomfortable narrative rather than recounting a straight-out (romantic or funny) story. Even though audiences are well aware what commercials want from them, the immersive atmosphere in a Lynch commercial and the lack of images of the item advertised until by the very end may persuade more effectively. A Lynch commercial, "gets under our skin because *you don't know what it wants from you*. It enters you like a dream", to borrow a phrase from John Powers (2009 [2001]: 223—italics in original). Just like Lynch's films.

Much has been written about intertextuality in Lynch's *oeuvre* and much fan writing has consistently made lists of the intertextual network of references across his work. However, the point is that the many repetitions and returns to earlier ideas and images are never just returns and repetitions but innovations and changes in repetitions—transportations, transmutations, translations. This structure of repetition, the return to the same material, including the transportation of figures, props and characters into other works and different genres—such as his commercials—illustrates Lynch's often repeated claim about creativity being an ongoing process. "A film isn't finished till it's finished," he has said on many occasions (for example, Lynch 2006: 84). This saying apparently applies to more than the films. David Lynch's works, be it films, TV series, photography, music videos, commercials or paintings, are in a sense never finished. They all partake of his intertextual web of ideas and worlds, which he keeps developing or places in new contexts.

Just a few examples of commercials and intertextuality from an extensive list: the mysterious blue rose in *Lady Blue Shanghai* , which appears for the first time at the beginning of *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* (1992) and is subsequently incorporated more fully in *Twin Peaks: The Return*; the use (or rather adaptation (Malkinson 2016)) of *Twin Peaks* characters and places in his four Georgia Coffee ads (1992); the black hole in the Opium commercial for Yves Saint Laurent continues in

the close-up of the hole in the woman's slip in *Mulholland Drive* , which like the scene in the short *The Darkened Room* (2002) points forward to *Inland Empire* (which apparently got the idea for the Lost Girl from this short film); and the transportation of the simple fire icon from Lynch's many paintings (many of which bear the word "fire" in the title—see Chap. 2) to both the short teaser for Michael Jackson's *Dangerous* album (1991) and the final abstract and surreally grotesque shots in the *Wall* ad for Adidas (1993). Vice versa, commercials can function as a reservoir of ideas that may later be used, like Lynch's weird 1998 commercial for Swiss cigarette brand Parisienne: the setting is an abandoned gas station by night. There is electricity inside the house, and there are dark people with the power to provoke rain and fire—which evidently reminds us of the convenience store and the Woodsmen in *Twin Peaks: The Return.* The ultra-close-up on Michael Jackson's eyes by the end of the teaser for Jackson's *Dangerous* album is reminiscent of the ultra-close-up of Virginia Madsen's eyes in the opening sequence of *Dune* and of Lula's eyes by the end of *Wild at Heart*, when Sailor is about to leave her. One final example: in the *Thriller* teaser, Michael Jackson's face emanates in a golden orb from an outburst of fire just like the floating golden orb with the image of Laura Palmer or Garland Briggs in *Twin Peaks: The Return.*

Lady Blue Shanghai

David Lynch has made one longer commercial, *Lady Blue Shanghai*. The film was commissioned for the luxury brand Dior to advertise their famous "Lady Dior" bag. The 15-minute commercial was launched on the Dior website in May 2010. The film is "presented by Dior" in the opening credits, but David Lynch was given a relatively free hand to make the film. Dior had just stipulated that three conditions were met. David Lynch has said: "They called me up and said, 'Would you like to make a short film for the Internet? You can do anything you want, you just need to show the handbag, the Pearl Tower and some old Shanghai'" (Copping 2010; Todd 2012). Lynch agreed to make the commercial and said about the work that "[t]his falls between a regular film and a commercial. I liked that idea. There are adverts and people get hit hard, and then there is this, where it is like coming at it from a different angle" (Copping 2010). The rules set by the Dior company

resulted in a narrative film, which refrained from showing the Dior logo, but showed the Oriental Pearl Tower, the Lady Dior bag, and the female protagonist and her lover running around in Old Shanghai and dancing in an old-fashioned room to tango music.

The film falls into three parts. A woman (played by Marion Cotillard)[14] walks into her hotel in Shanghai, and as she comes to the door of her room, she hears music inside. The music comes from an old-fashioned gramophone, and as she turns it off, there is a flash of lightning that illuminates white smoke coming from a bag on the floor in the middle of the room. A couple of close-ups show the bag from which the light and smoke apparently emanate. The frightened woman walks to the telephone and calls hotel security with a characteristic Lynch sentence: "Someone is in my room."[15]

In the second part of the film, the woman tells the hotel guards (reminiscent of Lynch's many couples of deadpan or somewhat unintelligent policemen) about her feeling of "having been here before. In Shanghai. This feeling came upon me as I heard the pearls falling and hitting the jade". There is a cut to an abstract, blurred image of glowing golden balls falling and bouncing on a green surface. The woman continues in an almost hypnotic voice (resembling the woman's voice-over in *Boat*) to recall: "It seemed as if suddenly I was in the Old Shanghai, saw dark alleys, narrow stairs, heard music." When her voice-over stops, we see her enter an entirely red room and meet a man. They kiss and dance, after which they run through Old Shanghai streets and onto a balcony looking onto the river Huangpu and the Pearl Tower in the background. Apparently, he cannot be with her and they assure each other of their love. While they are looking over the river, a video clip of Cotillard with the Dior bag in her hand shows on a building and the bag breaks away from the image and floats towards them. The man fades away while simultaneously he is holding out a blue rose in his hand towards her.

In the final part of the film, we are back in the woman's hotel room. The camera zooms in on the blue bag as she looks at it—while the two hotel guards, eerily silent and motionless, look at her. She walks towards the bag, there is another flash of lightning, and as she opens the bag, she sees the blue rose encircled in a spotlight. From an above angle, the camera tracks into the blue rose, which she devotedly picks

up. She smells it and then puts it back. In the final frontal medium shot she sits with an anguished look on her face and hugs the bag with the blue rose, while her image is doubled by means of an enlarged double exposure, which, blurred and transparent, hovers unsteadily in the frame. She may have ended up with a precious object. Yet, the unsteady double exposure provides the impression of a fragile subjectivity that not even a Dior bag can amend. And in a Lynch commercial too, we may find, as German writer Andreas Platthaus (2009) reminds us that mystery is "surrendering to its impenetrability, not getting to the bottom of it" (2009: 273).

As I have already touched upon, discussions about *Lady Blue Shanghai* (Wolthuis 2019; Copping 2010; Berry 2013; Berra 2012) have argued that the communicative intention inherent in the genre, to draw attention to a commodity, blocks the production of a truly Lynchian work. Josette Wolthuis, for example, asks whether we should take seriously the fact that an image of the bag floats across from the Pearl Tower to the two lovers. Her answer is to suggest that the ad should be read ironically. Jess Berry criticizes that "while the film is not an obvious advertisement it still fails to obscure its commercial imperative" (2013: 52). She adds:

> The bag's entrance is a spectacular one, literally appearing in a flash of light and puff of smoke. This rather tawdry device acts as a parody of Lynch's previous work and so his *oeuvre* is cast as a commodity in the same mode as the Dior handbag. The branded product becomes a central character that undergoes a transformation from a source of anxiety to a fetish object that replaces Cotillard's love interest. (Ibid.)

A bit more ambiguously, John Berra tends to dismiss the film as not really Lynchian by arguing that the Lady Dior bag is the true protagonist and "the dominant voice here is that of the brand rather than that of the director" (2012: 247). Yet, he also claims that the film "can still hold the interest of Lynch aficionados as a typically stylized exploration of repressed memory". Consequently, he finds it an interesting example of contemporary convergence culture. Berra concludes that the film balances "between creative interests and

commercial requirements" (2012: 247) but basically, he sees artistic intentions and commercial interests as two fundamentally different things.[16]

As I see *Lady Blue Shanghai*, there is no innate contradiction between artistic intentions and commercial interests. The work is commissioned to communicate as a commercial, and it is an experiment with the PD-150 camera's ability to create visual noise. Therefore, I see *Lady Blue Shanghai* as a *hybrid* work. It is a film, a commercial and a noise work at one and the same time. This hybridity is not least obvious in the middle part of the work, which illustrates the main character's recounting to the hotel security guards of her experience (or dream) of having been in Shanghai before and having met a lover in the old part of Shanghai. The visual noise aesthetic in this part is created by means of a range of digital blurring and distortion strategies, which procure a sense of disorientation and disassociation and dissolve boundaries between dream and reality.

The dialogue between the lovers takes place on a rooftop facing the Pearl Tower and the Shanghai skyline, and in this scene a range of *image distortions* procure visual noise. *Fish-eye distortions* of close-ups displace proportions between foreground and background and provide an impression of the characters having been cut-and-pasted into the frame somewhat amateurishly from another file. It seems like the two lovers are there and not there at one and the same time—or like a surveillance camera had captured them. Likewise, the male character seems repeatedly to disappear from the image screen and then reappear. From the female character's subjective point of view, we see her caress the man's face, but all of a sudden, her hand is empty, and the caressing gesture made strange (like the Crying Girl in *Inland Empire* after Nikki has disappeared).

Editing disruptions and a kind of *stop-motion camera technique* provide a look of animated film to the scene instead of live action and blur boundaries between the indexical and iconic aspect of the photographic image. Finally, the two characters deliver their lines in a stiff and amateurish, strangely disembodied manner, like they were digitized apparitions, avatars in some computer game. The lightly asynchronous sound, which gives the impression that the words are not emanating from their mouths, emphasizes the mechanical character of

their appearance. Lynch seems to have been working on “the digital indeterminacy of the pixel” (Kasman 2011) to suspend lip sync. Thereby he attributes to the spoken word a disembodied, ghostly ambience that puts digital technology to the front, the way words are made to sound, not what is spoken.

Another recurrent aesthetic strategy in this part of the commercial is *digital blurring*, which is used in the rooftop scene and in the previous scene where the two lovers flee through the old town. In the rooftop scene, close-ups keep coming in and out of focus, not only in tune with the characters’ change of movement and distance from the camera but at random. Likewise, the faces’ contours are continuously a bit blurred, as if two identical images were laid upon each other and displaced just a tiny bit. When the lovers run through the old town, *layers of superimpositions* create a distortion of the features (in a Baconesque way that we know, for example, from *Lost Highway*), a blurring of contours and a ghostly translucence (Illustration 5.2). This rich visual noise aesthetics is created through a mixture of slow-motion techniques, ultra-fast tracking shots, extremely long exposure time, time lapse photography and extreme lightning. The result is that the image at times dissolves into pure abstraction, a pattern of coloured and moving lines scattered randomly across the frame, as if the director were trying to reinvent pure cinema in the age of the digital (Illustration 5.3).

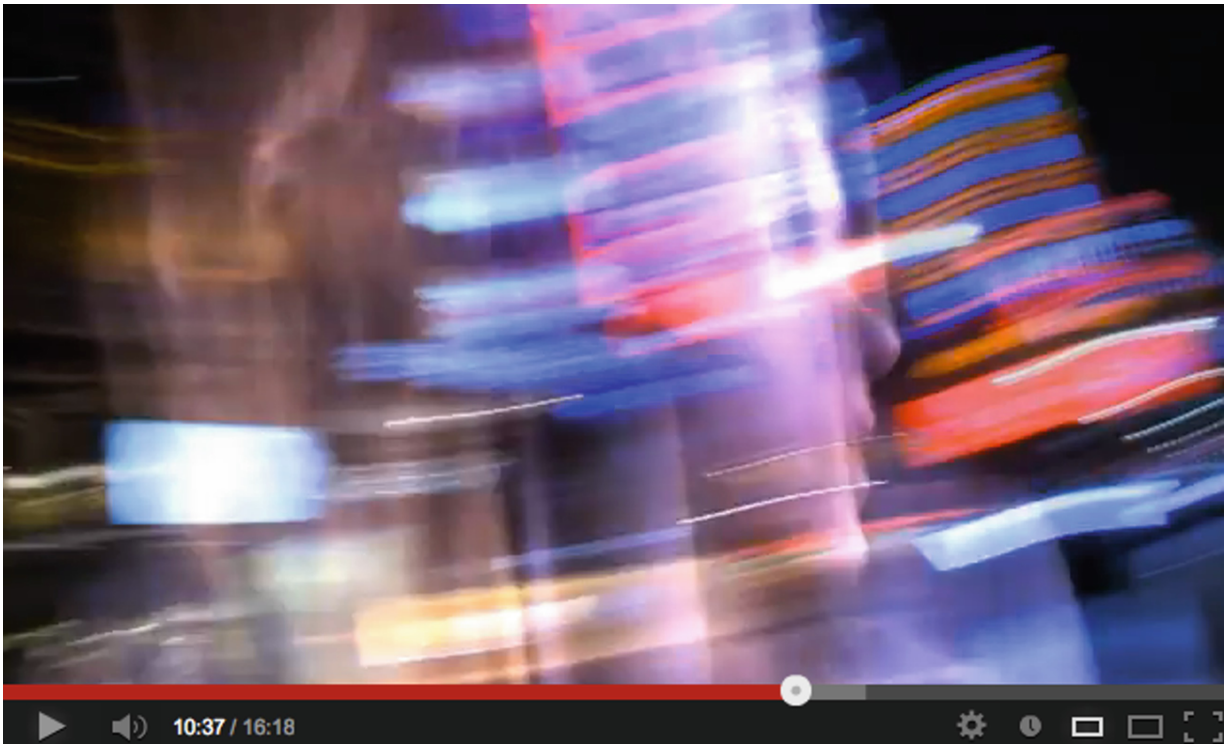


Illustration 5.2 Digital blurring in *Lady Blue Shanghai* (framegrab)

Illustration 5.3 Digital blurring in *Lady Blue Shanghai* (framegrab)

Another example of a distortion that in a more literal sense than the previous examples procures (visual) noise is the *sound of analogue* everywhere in the work—in the form of noise from an old record. The tune "Tango Fate" played by the *International Novelty Orchestra* in a recording from the 1920s is heard from the analogue 78-inch record in the woman's hotel room when she returns. A bit later the music continues on the soundtrack during the lovers' meeting, their dance and the first part of their run through the old city. The pronounced analogue noise of the needle in the groove (a well-known Lynch sound since Henry put the needle on a record at the beginning of *Eraserhead*) contributes a sense of nostalgia and Old Shanghai. Moreover, it adds a sense of tactile hearing to the digitally produced visual noise and enhances the enigmatic feeling of the scene underlining that, as emphasized by Salomé Voegelin, "sound is always ephemeral and doubtful" (2010: 24). In all, this comprehensive noise , visual and aural, detaches itself from the narrative and creates a dizzying but also seductive atmosphere of uncertainty.

The only image that stands out from this visual noise is the high-resolution photograph of the blue Dior bag. Briefly, it detaches itself from a bright high-resolution yellow surface on a large video screen that covers the upper part of one of the skyscrapers and floats through the air towards the two lovers on the rooftop. It is focused, crisp and sharp—at once a foreign body in an uneven flow of visual noise *and* what the commercial is all about. The bag is at once familiar and yet unfamiliarly full of concreteness, "crystal clear" in the midst of the abundance of blurred images and abstractions.

The commodity emerges as an alien despite its distinctive sharpness. This aesthetic anomality in the context of visual noise might be regarded as obeying the requirements of Dior, but it might also be seen as a self-referential gesture on the part of the director—at least if one bears in mind Lynch's dislike of high-def. Lynch said in *Catching the Big Fish* in his praise of the Sony PD-150 for being "nowhere near high-def": "high-def, unfortunately, is so crystal clear" (2006: 153). However, despite its fetichized appearance, the bag is not merely "a fetish object that replaces Cotillard's love interest" as Berry suggests. Just like the blue rose, a particular Lynch mysteriousness is attached to it. This becomes obvious in the final scene when the overexposed blue bag, lit

magically as if from the inside, calls to mind the blue cube-shaped box with the triangular keyhole that Betty finds in her bag in the Club Silencio scene in *Mulholland Drive*. When Rita opens the box upon their return home, she finds in it nothing but an impenetrable uncanny blackness, a "void" (Mactaggart 2014), which the camera dives into with a hollow thunder. The seemingly magical light that emanates from the blue bag in the commercial comprises nothing of the sinister emptiness in the blue cube. The blue rose itself melancholically refers to a lost love story and has nothing of the slightly uncanny secretiveness attached to it in the *Twin Peaks* works. Even so, despite a possibly slightly ironic gesture vis à vis the atmosphere of memory and nostalgia attached to this commercial, the visual noise in the middle part of the ad replaces the narrative with an aesthetic sensibility of the non-signifying.

The aesthetic strategy in the commercial, which is another example of what I have called visual noise, resembles what Laura U. Marks (2000) has called *haptic visuality* . In Marks, haptic visuality is an aesthetic strategy that, through the blurring and distortion of the image or by means of ultra-close-ups, directs focus at the image—its colours, its texture, its sense of touch and attack on the body—instead of narrative. Marks uses the term *haptic cinema* for a specific discussion about intercultural cinema and memory and the ways in which this large body of films and video hits the viewers sensuously. I would argue that Lynch's particular ways of creating audio-visual noise procure a similar tactile, multi-sensuous way of looking and hearing. Marks refers, for example, to graininess, texture, over- and underexposure and changes in focus as examples of a haptic sensibility in "tactile or at least insufficiently visual qualities" (Marks 2000: 175), which "discourage the viewer from distinguishing objects and encourage a relation to the screen as a whole" (ibid.: 172). These characteristics have been essential to my analyses of visual noise in this chapter. My point is that visual noise in Lynch, understood as an at once tactile and immersive audio-visuality, is *not* a question of being smoothly transported into, and absorbed by, a well-defined narrative space. Neither is it a question of illusion. On the contrary. Lynch's powerful audio-visuality offers a feeling of being immersed or thrown in a world which is as much an atmosphere as a space. Thus, when it comes to the audio-visual works,

atmosphere is used as much in Schmitz' as in Böhme's understanding of the term. At the same time, immersion is a sensibility, a tactile sense of texture and surface. This is a much messier experience as it continuously makes one aware of it being a mediated experience. Entering a Lynch world entails the (pleasant, but also disturbing and exhausting) activation of many sensory registers. It also entails voluntarily surrendering to intense sensory exposure. Therefore, immersion in a Lynch world is not like being passively absorbed. It cannot but entail reflection and a gaze that alternates between surface and depth.

Marks points to the haptic qualities in the intimate (which we find in the home movie references in *Boat* and the recounting of a blurry intimate memory in *Lady Blue Shanghai*) and the tactile (procured by the textured abstractions in both works). Interestingly, inserted on one of the first pages of Marks's *Touch* (2002) is a black-and-white still from Seoungho Cho's video work *Forward, Back, Side, Forward Again* from 1994, which is strikingly reminiscent of the blurred abstract images in *Lady Blue Shanghai*. Marks's description confirms this likeness:

> In his *Forward, Back, Side, Forward Again* (1994) people moving quickly past on a New York street at dusk are transformed, through long exposure and slow motion, into ghostly paths of light that ripple through the space of vision. (2002: 1)

Let me emphasize that while sound is essential to Lynch's multi-sensuous art, Laura U. Marks's book is rarely about sound, let alone noise, which she only touches upon late in *The Skin of the Film*. However, Voegelin's understanding of sound as a bodily feeling bears similarities to Marks's haptics. Voegelin writes about sound as "perpetually on the move, making time and tenses rather than following them": "Sound invites the body into experience and reciprocally makes the object physical" (2010: 14). In like manner, Marks proposes that one might understand "haptic hearing" as "that usually brief moment when all sounds present themselves to us undifferentiated" (2000: 183) —that is, I would say, as noise. So even though Marks talks only briefly about "haptic sound" or "haptic hearing", what she does say is very similar to my understanding of visual noise. However, in Lynch,

moments “when all sounds present themselves to us undifferentiated” are often not brief. The sonic undifferentiated as noise is endemic to Lynch’s atmospheric architecture, to borrow the title of Böhme’s 2018 book.

The PD-150’s low-pixel video density produces a tactile quality, which Marks (however not with reference to the PD-150 but to the graininess of video in general) calls “insufficient”—a characteristic that resembles Mactaggart’s “weaknesses”. Lynch’s use of the PD-150 camera procures a tactile way of looking by blocking but also widening the viewers’ vision and auditory capabilities in different ways. The term “haptic” draws attention to the surface quality of the images, texture and tactility at the same time as there is a hint of depth and layering in many of these images. They at once draw attention to media technology and create an environment. “Haptic images refuse visual plenitude,” says Marks (ibid.: 177). Similarly, Lynch claims that he is opposed to things “getting too specific” or “crystal clear” and indicates his preference for the “abstract”—the non-referential and texture—in short visual noise.

Visual Noise in *Crazy Clown Time* and *I Have a Radio*

Lynch has to date made two videos for tracks on his *Crazy Clown Time* album from 2011 with Dean Hurley as sound engineer: the approximately seven-minute-long title music video made with the release in 2011, and in 2020 the six-minute *I Have a Radio* made into a bonus track on the deluxe issue of the CD. Reviews of the album were mixed. “Strange, yet strangely engaging,” *Entertainment Weekly* wrote, the album being “after all, a David Lynch record” (Jensen 2012). A range of reviews touched upon Lynch’s strange singing and music, which veer on the border of noise: “None of these songs actually feel like *songs*,” Mike Powell (2011) wrote in *Pitchfork*. In another review, the music for the album was described as “tense and nerve-wracking sounds” (Willman 2011) and as “a kind of fringe-art experience”; “The elements of music are present, but it at times feels questionable to even call it music” (Cataldo 2011). *The Atlantic*’s more extended review concentrated on Lynch’s singing, which, according to writer Esther Yi

(2011), transforms recognizable elements from used music genres into noise: "[A]s Lynch opens his mouth any sense of comfort vanishes." She also contends: "Lynch's voice remains unfamiliar and distant, yet somehow viscerally invasive."

The music's resemblance to noise is an important feature of the music video's overall excessive audio-visual noise. *Crazy Clown Time* is a kind of condensation of a range of elements in Lynch's universe, an audio-visual "noisescape", which radically rejects finite form and order. It is set in one of Lynch's iconic places, the backyard, boiled down to an affective environment. According to Lynch, it depicts an "intense, psychotic backyard craziness, fuelled by beer" (as quoted in Holland 2016). Instead of the white picket fence we know from *Blue Velvet* and *The Straight Story* , a high wall surrounds this backyard—trailers and buildings are vaguely seen in the dark on the outside. The enclosed and claustrophobic space is not peaceful but saturated with negative affect. Anger, self-absorbed sexuality, drunken inwardness and an outwardly communicated clenched bodily energy exude from the group of partygoers. Neither is the backyard tidy. On the contrary, it is chaotic, full of rubbish, beer bottles, ketchup bottles, used paper plates, half-eaten food, wrappings. The group of young people sitting, lying or standing in the confined environment are each absorbed, or maybe rather hypnotized, by the music and the singing (by Lynch himself in an electronically distorted high-pitched boyish voice), which comes out of a monitor on a table.[17]

The music's heavy beats bring about repetitive, monotonous bodily moves: clenched fists pounded on thighs or on to a table by a man glaring tensely into the air, a guy with a Mohican sitting in a chair rocking almost in pain to the rhythm, shoes knocking against each other, a blond voluptuous woman taking her shirt off and moving and moaning self-absorbedly, and a guy in a football outfit who keeps running on the spot. The group's appearance and behaviour match the lyric's repetition of the same simple descriptive words and lines (composed by Lynch and Dean Hurley like all other tracks on the album): "Paulie had a red shirt" is synchronous with a shot of the tense guy in a red shirt; "Suzy, she ripped her shirt off completely", as we see the blond girl take off her shirt, and so on. No one is talking to anyone else. Each person is absorbed in his or her own body, repeating over

and over again the same movements. Interspersed with the monotonous beat are inarticulate noises (violent screaming by one of the guys, Suzy's erotic moaning, the distant distorted voices of two people lying on the grass apparently talking without talking to each other, the screaming coming from two people fighting). Other individuals also perform mechanical repetitions of the same bodily moves and the football player keeps running and running on the same spot. At one point, some of the young people start running in circles within the confined space, first one way and then the opposite, without getting anywhere. Moreover, the guy with Mohican sets his hair on fire.

The different kinds of distorted images are essential to the construction of visual noise in *Crazy Clown Time* (Illustration 5.4).[18]

Illustration 5.4 Framegrab from *Crazy Clown Time*

Besides the grainy and blurred close-ups on the monitor, stop motion aesthetics, reverse frame technique, many kinds of motion blurring , shaky images and oblique angles, as well as ghostly, transparent, shaky superimpositions and ghostly traces of light altogether produce a somewhat abstract and tactile image surface. As

the young people start their running in circles, cutting becomes more and more frenzied, and more and more transparent layers are put on top of each other. All in all this blurring of boundaries creates a dizzying, drunken visuality.

The repetitive lyrics are without rhythm. They are more or less spoken by Lynch, and simply repeat the image side of the video as already mentioned: "Paulie had a red shirt—Paulie had a red shirt—Suzy, she ripped her shirt off completely—Paulie, he had a red shirt, Paulie, he had a red shirt—Suzy, she ripped her shirt off completely" and so it goes on. The lyrics are recounting in short statements what the individuals are doing—except for the repetition in the middle and at the end of the song of the lines "It was crazy clown time, crazy clown time. It was crazy clown time. It was real fun". The mood seems to be beyond fun, though. The video creates an atmosphere of drunkenness filled with tension and bodily outbursts, but also of bodies in tune with the music.[19] The lyrics are not anchoring the visual, and vice versa. "What you hear is what you get," as Timothy Holland (2016) notes. This isomorphous repetition of lines and doubling of images and words create an absurd surplus, which drain the music video of meaning, even negate meaning. Altogether, the meaningless doublings augment the work's visual noise.

In his discussion of the video, Timothy Holland (2016) suggests that the lyrics in which a "we" appears—"We all ran around/We all ran around the backyard/It was crazy clown time"—create a disturbing sense of claustrophobia or doubling of perception, as if Lynch was at once witness to, and participant in, the party. This point regarding blurring of boundaries between inside and outside accords well with the mix between images of the backyard excesses and ultra-close-ups of Lynch's face and mouth on the monitor. The music video starts by repeating well-known Lynch images—an ultra-short close-up of flickering static (similar to the opening of the *Duran Duran Unstaged* concert video that Lynch directed in 2011 and released on DVD in 2014—I return to this video in the conclusion), an ultra-short close-up of fire and an ultra-short close-up of large, blurred letters (fragments of the lyrics). Throughout the video, there are cuts to the monitor's pixelated and blurry ultra-close-ups of Lynch singing—or talking or whining. The monitor and the blurry images could be regarded as a condensed

representation of the music video as visual noise, just like the blurred, flickering images and the too close close-ups contribute to the video's affective atmosphere.

In a similar vein, Timothy Holland (2016) emphasizes that the images on the monitor are not superior to the other images in the music video. The point is a *mise en abyme*-like structure, and the blurry, pixelated TV images enhance the tactile visual noise otherwise procured in the video. Holland's consideration of Lynch's position as author connects with another discussion about the term "traditional" in his article. Holland quotes Lynch for having called the video a "traditional backyard story" and asks what is meant by "traditional". He assumes that Lynch means the use of recognizable (stereotypical) props from a suburban backyard party "taken to extremes" (Holland 2016: 454). There is something "eerily familiar" about the scenery, "yet the diegesis resists normalization" (ibid.). Holland's point is that this is one more example of Lynch's recurrent making of the familiar unfamiliar and "the displacement of values". He concludes: "Lynch reminds us through *Crazy Clown Time* that this understanding [of the "traditional" as "legitimized reiteration of practices, doxa or institutions"] is haunted by its other, more sinister and playful side" (ibid.: 456)—a point that I certainly subscribe to. It goes for much of Lynch's imagery that it is in so many ways blurring boundaries, displacing cognitive habits, creating fissures and gaps in the recognizable and dissolving boundaries between audio-visuality's representational and non-representational. It also goes for this video that it displaces one of Lynch's own tropes, the backyard.

Holland does not go deeper into the images and the editing of the video—which are otherwise distinguishing features of the genre. Significant to me in this music video is how it blurs boundaries between music video and noise art: how the refined blurring of image boundaries and the excessive repetitive aural noise procure a tactile visual noise. And how the video's visual noise aesthetic creates the extraordinary intensity and the sensibility Nechvatal called "disturbing, sensorially reverberating" (2011: 17).

Despite being audio-visual, the music video is an apt example of Nechvatal's understanding of noise art—"noise's overwhelming sensations and qualities of excess: an incoherent and multivalent excess

that defeats attempts at reducing reality to the indexical level of representation" (ibid.: 19). Nechvatal continues: (audio-visual) noise art "is just a *rupture signifying transmission of excess and/or negativity* for the artist to employ or disregard at will. It can be lavish and thrilling. It can be incredibly tedious and boring" (ibid.: 37—italics in original).

Crazy Clown Time is indeed "lavish and thrilling". It also touches hard on the body, not only because "noise is what lies outside of our habitual comfort zone at any point in time" (Nechvatal 2011: 35) but because of the continued repetition and the enclosed space's affective atmosphere of drunken intensity. As already pointed out in this book's second chapter, atmospheres surround people and things at the same time as they evolve through the exchanges between people and things. However, as Anderson (2009) points out, atmospheres always include a *more* . Atmospheres are not reducible to that which emanates from people and things, even though this communication is the precondition for an atmosphere to arise. "Atmospheres are a kind of indeterminate affective 'excess' [...] singular affective qualities that emanate from but exceed the assembling of bodies" (Anderson 2009: 80). *Crazy Clown Time*'s dense atmosphere can be said to exceed the assembly of bodies, each of which seems absorbed in himself or herself and creates an excess of visual noise. *Crazy Clown Time* is indexed (to use Plantinga's (1997) term once more) as a music video. However, it crosses borders to (audio-visual) noise art.

The video's temporal loop, which is composed of the extended layers of repetition in the lyrics, the running back and forth in circles by the young people and the continuous pressure on representation, encourages not only what Laura U. Marks calls "embodied viewing" but also embodied hearing. The insistent repetition of inane sentences and monotonous beats, the aggressive non-linguistic outbursts, the strange singing emanating from blurred, sometimes disintegrating and enigmatically shining images on a monitor and the distorted images that more often than not dissolve into abstractions, like digital expressionistic brushstrokes, create a twisted, dizzying audio-visual environment that affects the senses more directly and more comprehensively than "ordinary" audio-visual language. What Lynch's visual noise does instead is—because of the images' lack of (aesthetic

and narrative) specificity and their blocking of definite meaning—lure the viewer to dive into what philosopher Boris Groys and film-maker Andrei Ujica (2007) call "a perfect enigma", "a state whereby all the strings of time draw circles" (2006: 382) However, this enigma in *Crazy Clown Time* as well as in most other Lynch works is an *impossible* enigma. Just like, or maybe precisely because, Lynch's images often stray away from narrative in order to produce sensuous—painterly, textured—surfaces, so the narratives, to the extent that they invite a search for meaning and coherence, provide a state "whereby all the strings of time draw circles, intersecting with each other in such a way that no resolution is ever possible" (ibid.) and no coherence arrived at.

The 2020 music video to the bonus track "I Have a Radio" is quite different from the *Crazy Clown Time* video. It generates visual noise in like manner, though: by repetition in the lyrics (just the line "I have a radio" repeated by Lynch in a whispering voice); by repetition of the same movements (more radically than in *Crazy Clown Time*, as two animated figures repeat the same movements at the same interval throughout the video's duration of approximately six minutes); by a vocal that proclaims more than it sings; and finally by the music bordering on noise (even by the end, as some critics have observed, by making the music sound like pigs grunting).

The video is another example of how works are continuously evolving in the working process of Lynch the intermedia artist: the way he returns to earlier works, changes them and transports them into other media. The video's title echoes the title of a couple of earlier works, a simple black-and-white lithograph from 2009 and a large mixed-media-on-cardboard painting from 2012. In these works, we see a figure who holds a portable radio in his very long outstretched arms. The title is written across the upper part of the lithograph as in so many other Lynch paintings, lithographs and drawings, whereas the mixed-media work has "I have a Radio" written in a bubble, like words coming from the mouth of the sculpted person's weird mask-like face. Both works create a bodily connection between the transportable medium and the person (reminiscent of the video recorder attached to Mystery Man's eye in *Lost Highway*). In the mixed-media work, the transportable radio is put on display by the figure as if it were a precious object, whereas in the black-and-white lithograph the radio is

like a noisy technology, which exudes a black energy. Further to the above discussion, the works could be said to illustrate how sound attacks the body directly, just like the long arms (in contrast to the video camera directly on Mystery Man's eye) illustrate that sound and noise glue themselves to the body even at a distance.

However, the actual source of the music video is a black-and-white watercolour called *With Myself* (no date, exhibited at *The Air is on Fire* in 2007), which shows two figures with outstretched arms standing side by side facing the viewer. The one to the left is blacker than the other and wears a hat, whereas the figure to the right is made somewhat transparent using a mixture of grey and black lines.[20] This is a picture of a man and his shadow. However, who is the man and who is the shadow is not evident and, therefore, who it is that is referring to himself. The title "With Myself" sounds like a typical descriptive title of a snapshot, an image taken at a random moment in time. Being with myself is thus a provisional condition but also a condition charged with tension, judging from the eruption painted in the middle of the frame. The title indicates that the two figures do not comprise a unity, as drawing attention to being with oneself also, paradoxically, draws attention to a splitting of oneself. The image thus portrays a subject(ivity) that is only locally coherent.

The watercolour bears titular similarity to a range of paintings, particularly from the late 1980s and early 1990s, in which variations of the personal pronoun "I" appear in the title, such as *Suddenly My House Became a Tree of Sores*; *Here I Am—Me as a House*; *That's Me in Front of My House*; *Shadow of a Twisted Hand Across My House*; *My Head is Disconnected*; as well as *With Myself* from 2007. The paintings are what Lynch calls "neighbourhood stories" (in McKenna 2007: 32). However, the paintings more likely radiate an atmosphere of fragile subjectivity, of not feeling like a whole. The "I"s are painted as thin matchstick figures with extremely long legs, which seem like they could break any time. Similarly, the houses are small, sometimes on fire, and unable to provide shelter (see also Chap. 2). In all these works, the "I", "me" or "myself" addressed by the titles is without firm contours. However, there is a strange discrepancy between the "I" of the paintings and the "I" of the titles—for example, in *My Head is Disconnected* , as if the title with the personal pronoun is expressed by a person who is able to see

himself from the outside and denies the fragility designated in the paintings by addressing it. Hence, at the same time as the paintings are about a lack of coherence and frailty, there is a kind of powerful surplus conscience in the titles.

In contrast to the *Industrial Soundscape* experiment, in which a photograph has been radically altered (discussed on page 145 ff.), the music video *I Have a Radio* (Illustration 5.5) has primarily animated the two figures on the original *With Myself* watercolour and also animated a couple of the black dots scattered across the original watercolour. The two figures move in the same rhythmic way, swinging their arms to the left and right and then taking a short break before they start again at regular intervals, like they were dancing on the spot to some unheard music. The black spots floating across the image surface remind us of balls in a pinball machine that move randomly across the screen once they bump against the frame. It looks like the contrasts in the original watercolour have been sharpened. The dark parts of the painting are darker in the video, including also the shapeless form between the two men (which could be an eruption of stones and earth from the ground). The lighter man has been made much lighter. Finally, what adds to the complex intermedia layering of this apparently simple noise work is that Lynch has made the entire image shake a bit. However, the two "dancing" figures only shake with the image during their short breaks. So, it seems like they are merged into the background when they stop dancing and shake in the same rhythm as the entire image frame. When they start dancing again, it appears as if they are released from the background and take on a rhythmical life of their own. Therefore, the two figures alternately protrude from the surface and are enmeshed in it.[21]

Illustration 5.5 Framegrab from *I Have a Radio*

One final textual addition to this strange and complexly layered video: the watercolour *With Myself* reminds us of another dark watercolour called *Man Walking Dog* , which Lynch has called "a homage to Bacon" (McKenna 2007: 28; *Unified Field* exhibition catalogue, plate 54). The work also shows a double figure, one a bit lighter than the other. They stand close to each other and hold the dog, which is doubled in the same way. This is not a moving painting, but it could be seen as capturing a shaking, as if both the dog and the man had moved a bit and there was still a trace left of the former position. *Man Walking Dog* should thus be included in this group of paintings and a video, which, when put together, blurs boundaries between still and moving images and creates visual noise.

In this chapter I have characterized both the music videos and the shorter, more experimental works I have taken up as *noise works* . Visual noise is created in different ways, but particularly through a simple digital camera like the PD-150 that make blurred images and distorted spaces. However, visual noise can also be created by blocking vision by other means with a more sophisticated camera. David

Rodowick claimed that there is no *whole* on any level in digital cinema. The shot is not a single unit. Any part of an image can be broken down into pixels and manipulated independently of all the others. Significantly, Lynch said about his manipulation of the photograph of the tanks: “I took everything apart.” In that sense, visual noise in Lynch’s digital works may be understood as “the noise of heterogeneity” (Voegelin 2010: 63) visually as well as aurally.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_6

6. David Lynch and the Fragment

Anne Jerslev[1]
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anne Jerslev
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

Ideas never really come all at once for a whole feature anyway. They come in fragments. So you could stop at any moment and say: "These are my fragments; how will I ever get to a whole movie from these?" But those fragments are compelling other fragments to join them. With Mulholland Drive I had a whole bunch of a certain type of fragment—open-ended fragments. So they needed a certain type of idea to come in and tie them all together. That was the trick.
—Lynch in Rodley (2005 [1997]: 284)

Absolutely not, because then you end up making a message film. You see, I get ideas in fragments, and only when a bunch of fragments come together I say: "Oh, this is about this, or this could be about this." But there's absolutely no message, no steering anyone any which way. I just love the idea. I want to realise them because I'm in love with them.
—Lynch in Fox (2019)

At one point during their conversation about the works reproduced in *The Air is on Fire* exhibition catalogue (McKenna 2007: 23), Kristine McKenna asks about the written texts on an ink drawing with text on a piece of brown paper (catalogue page 128): "What's 'man in a garden',

‘figure with green’? There’s a list of…” Lynch interrupts her and answers: “They’re probably ideas.” Lynch and McKenna are talking about a small drawing (see illustration 6.1) made at the time of *The Grandmother* (1970) that shows two figures: human heads and torsos without arms. The larger figure is drawn with a deformed head, reminiscent of the Elephant Man. The head of the other figure (in jacket and tie) is merely a thin contour, the head just connected with the rest of the body by a string. In the upper left part of the piece of paper is written a list of words, like a memo: “Grandmother”,” man in a garden”, “figure w/green” (i.e., man in a garden crossed out and replaced with figure), “man in a garden”, “bride”. This constellation of a drawing, some texts and a fragment of a conversation printed in a catalogue illustrates Lynch’s working method. Moreover, it illuminates what he means by his recurrent reference to *ideas* whenever he is asked about his films. As he has said again and again: “I always go by ideas.”

I start this chapter by looking at Lynch’s description of his creative process. I focus on his use of the term *idea* and how this concept is tied with the notion of the fragment, which he often uses as well. I will then go on to discuss how the *fragment* can be used to describe the structure of (many) Lynch works. In Lynch’s works, fragments often have spatial forms. The fragment can be seen as an aesthetic figure of interruption in his narratives. Yet, interruption might not be the right word for a recurrent aesthetic and affective form. Fragments are fields or spaces of aesthetic and affective force in a context in which narrative development may be regarded as secondary, a necessity for transporting the viewer from one fragment to another. By way of theoretical background, I go back to the early Romantic ideas of the fragment in Schlegel’s late eighteenth-century writing. I also include more recent discussions on the fragment as a kind of writing in between culture’s fields of enunciation (Engdahl 1992 [1988]).

Thinking of Lynch’s audio-visual narratives by deploying the notion of the fragment means taking another analytical approach than unravelling a Lynch text as a complex puzzle that has to be put together. This metaphor implies that any single piece becomes meaningful only when it is united with the others into a coherent and meaningful whole. Thinking of the works as being held together by fragments makes it possible to think of entering into a Lynchian *network* in which any

possible totality is lost from view and from which there is no obvious exit. The illuminated exit sign that we find a few times in Lynch (most significantly in the club in which Fred Madison plays his sax in *Lost Highway*) may be regarded as an ironic comment to what is not present in Lynch's spaces. Because the fragment is not just a piece of a puzzle but a whole in itself (however blurred its boundaries may be to its textual surrounding), it is also defined by offering moments of compressed intensity.

Even though one should, as Swedish literary scholar Horace Engdahl (1992 [1988]) rightfully points out, be careful not to understand the fragment as a genre, I suggest that Lynch's fragments can be categorized according to some kind of generic similarity. So, in the second part of this chapter I discuss different examples of what I regard as particular Lynchian fragments. My argument is that even though the fragments partake of a whole and are formed by the whole, they have an aesthetic structure, an atmosphere and an intensity of their own which also distinguish them from the whole. I therefore suggest calling these fragments affective spaces. Obviously, I do not bring an archaeological gaze to Lynch's works. I am not interested in narrative coherence and solving some of the many mysteries in his works, unravelling, for example, the (temporal) connection between incidents in *Twin Peaks: The Return*—unravelling what happened to Audrey, for instance. I am not looking at how the fragments may be said to have a particular place in a whole, which the archaeological gaze is trained to do, as archaeologist Thora Petursdottir (2014) explains in her article about the part and the whole: "[I]t is generally not the fragment itself or its place in the present that is of value, but its addition to the wholeness of a *past entity* (and present collection) that is so sought after" (2014: 336). I am not particularly interested in narrative wholes—simply because this is not what we find in Lynch. I am interested in how the fragment as an aesthetic form creates a condensed affective atmosphere. Therefore, I merely go into a few short segments from some of Lynch's films and from *Twin Peaks: The Return* —the ultimate fragmented Lynch text—which have often come to my mind whenever I have thought of the Lynch *oeuvre*.

“I Always Go by Ideas”

Lynch’s answer to McKenna in the conversation I referred to in the first lines of the chapter indicates that the words on the slip of paper (Illustration 6.1) bear no meaning in themselves. They are not subtle in any way but may be regarded as written snapshots, traces of the working of Lynch’s mind in a particular time and space. Even though the drawing was done many years before the conversation took place, Lynch’s slightly careless answer indicates that the words made sense at the time of writing but maybe only in that short moment of creative arousal. The crossings out suggest that they are not carelessly written. They also seem private, almost like a code, and have apparently no connection whatsoever to the two weird figures beneath.

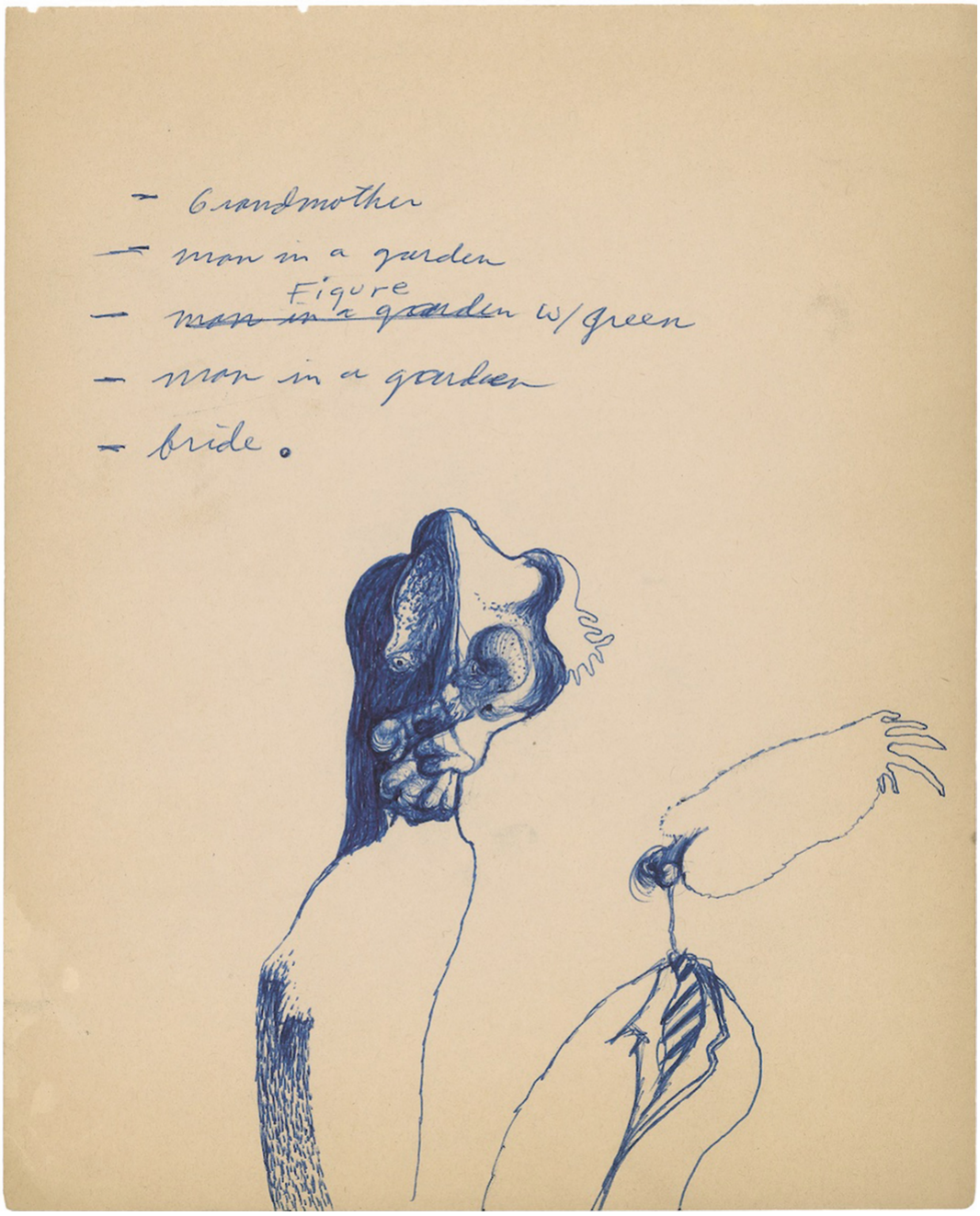


Illustration 6.1 The note with words. © David Lynch

To Lynch, an idea is not a theme or a segment of a narrative. As I understand it, ideas are moods attached to a certain abstraction ("figure", "man"), which may be concrete ("man in a garden") but is more likely abstract, a simple contour of something to which can be added something else, just like Lynch said about catching the idea for *Lost Highway* : "[T]hen I told Barry [Gifford] an idea that had come to

me the last night of shooting *Fire Walk with Me* . And it was *the videotapes* and *a couple*. And Barry loved this idea" (in Douridas 2009 [1997]: 150—my italics). The repetition of "man in a garden" in the note adds to the sense of code. However, in combination with the excerpt of the conversation between Lynch and McKenna, the written list and the two drawn figures make up a rare illustration of what Lynch means when he is talking about ideas and how he is working from an abstraction that is almost nothing and then adds to it.

It is worth noting that ideas as they are illustrated in the written text and the quote about *Lost Highway* are not fragments of narrative: "figure in a garden", "bride"—or "*videotapes* and *a couple*" designate rather a percept, a simple tableau, or a blurred still photo waiting to gain contours and come alive. Correspondingly, Lynch writes in *Catching the Big Fish* : "In *Blue Velvet* , it was red lips, green lawns and the song—Bobby Vinton's version of 'Blue Velvet'. The next thing was an ear lying in a field. And that was it" (Lynch 2006: 23). Thus, Lynch's way of describing an idea and his approach to beginning a new project bears similarity to the way he has so often indicated that as a young artist, he wanted his paintings to move (which I also touched upon in Chaps. 1 and 2).

His narrative of what brought him into film centres on an accidental occurrence. Chance happening is also a recurrent turning point in Lynch's narrative on his creative process. In Lynch's way of talking about ideas, an idea is at once a part of a whole and comprises the whole: "An idea comes. You get an idea and the idea tells you everything" (Esther 2009 [2006]: 247). Ideas are unique "sparks" (Lynch in Tirard 2002) that float around and can be caught like catching a fish in Lynch's own repetitive metaphoric language. His creative mantras seem to be intuition, an open mind to whatever idea comes around and being "true to the idea" during the work on realizing it in audio-visual language. Staying "true to an idea" means in Lynch's thinking being able to transform an idea from one medium into another, like from frozen contours or words on a piece of paper into (moving) images, to add volume and depth to the contours and to make them move in accordance with some of the possibilities that lay dormant in the initial contour and what Lynch felt to be right at the moment:

> You catch a film idea and you fall in love with it for two reasons. One is the idea itself and the second is how cinema can translate it. And then you just stay true to that idea and go. It keeps talking to you and you don't walk away from anything until it feels correct based on that idea . That's it. (Lynch in Nieland 2012: 167)

One way of nursing an idea "you fall in love with" is "taking advantage of accidents and setting up a situation where they can occur" (in Douridas 2009 [1997]: 152). Lynch contends "accidents have helped me a lot" (ibid.: 151).

Lynch has often been asked whether it is true that *Inland Empire* departed from a very long monologue performed by Laura Dern that he shot as a completed scene. In one interview he answers that "in the beginning there was no *Inland Empire* , no idea of a feature. All there was was an idea for a scene, that's it" (Barney 2009: 253). In another interview about the film Lynch elaborates on what happens once an idea has entered his creative mind (the quote is very similar to formulations in other interviews):

> So I'm looking at it and I say, "No, this isn't just a scene, this holds something more". And I think about it. In the meantime, though, I got another idea, and I wrote it down, and shot that. And that was actually two different scenes. And those scenes did not relate to the scene we were talking about. … Then, I got another idea, and I wrote it out, and shot that scene, and it didn't relate at all to what had gone before, not a bit. It did in a way, because it was the same character, but it didn't really. But there was something—I was still thinking about the previous scenes, but they did not relate, *at all*. (Barney 2009 [2008]: 254; for a similar quote see Esther 2009 [2006]: 247)

In the *Lynch 2* behind-the scenes documentary fragment, which is a special feature on the *Inland Empire* DVD, one gets a glimpse of this way of working from an idea: When Lynch is shown the opulent Polish mansion room, which is going to be used as location for a scene early in

the film, he is extremely content and responds: “I gotta go home and write for that”. A space inspires an idea and not the other way round.

To briefly return once more to the drawing and text from the *Air is on Fire* catalogue: The strange thing with this drawing as well as the many other small scribblings (drawn on post-its, on paper napkins, on pieces of notebook paper, etc.) was that they transformed when being exhibited side by side in a vitrine at the Fondation Cartier. In the context of the Paris exhibition in 2007, they each formed a finished whole, and some of them were quite powerful, as I wrote in the second chapter. But side by side, they were also like flashes, a chain of fragments that gave meaning not as parts of a finished whole but as the traces of a continuously working creative mind. Therefore, again, “puzzle” and the “pieces of the puzzle” are not a proper metaphor for either Lynch’s creative process or his works. The pieces in his works are not meant to take their one and only place in the completion of the predetermined jigsaw (remember that there was no historical ordering of the *Air is on Fire* exhibition). Lynch’s *oeuvre* does not consist of a finite set of pieces. Depending upon the number of ideas he “falls in love” with, as he keeps saying, the pieces can be put in many places in the network, which constitutes the contingent whole at any one time. They may be removed and stored and then reappear in some other work or as an independent fragment (which I will return to below). Apparently, anything can happen until the very end—when Lynch feels that the work is finished in accordance with the way he was able to realize his idea at a given point in time.

Thinking of *Twin Peaks: The Return* it is fair to say that the many fragments of which the series consists never add up to a coherent whole. Neither are they part of a well-defined whole. *Twin Peaks: The Return* is a confirmation of the Lynchian work as a continuously expanding intermedia work, in which boundaries are blurred between film, TV narrative, painting, sculpture and installation—even in different phases of elaboration and completion. *Twin Peaks: The Return* in essence provide the impression of a work that is in a process of becoming or change, of fragments that may combine with other fragments into a whole defined merely by the one-hour episode format. In Lynch’s way of working, a whole might not be a whole at all:

> When the film is finally cut together and you see it as a whole, more often than not, it doesn't work. And always before even working with fragments, pieces of this [!] a whole scene but it's not the whole. Then, when you see the whole and it's not working, it's another series of experiments to get the whole thing to work together and then there's the mixing, sounds and music, and that alters things and… (Douridas 2009 [1997]: 152)[1]

Following Derrida, Horace Engdahl (1992 [1988]) suggests provocatively that any text may be considered a fragment. Accordingly, Engdahl continues, one could argue that there is no such thing as a fragment, and neither is there such thing as a textual whole. Along the same line, literary scholar Justus Fetscher, echoing Schlegel , claims that "every text is in essence fragment, every fragment text" (Fetscher 2011: 53). Though Engdahl does not subscribe to the radicality in this claim, he argues that even the shortest text consists of a diversity of texts that are each related to each other. Of course, David Lynch's films each constitute a whole. They have a title; they are distributed as stand-alone works and are treated by the institution of critics as such. However, what give the films and the TV series their particular form are their different degrees of fragmentation. Fragments are evidently—for the above reason—assembled to constitute a whole, but arguing for a coherent whole is, in my opinion, not as interesting as delving into the richness of the fragments. I consider the entire Lynch work as being composed of fragments of different sizes in different media, which unite to different degrees depending upon the medium. However, I also see it in a paradoxical way as a fragmentary totality.

Even though Lynch himself operates with a sense of closure ("it's not finished until it's finished"), his departure from "ideas" that multiply and become more and more concrete, as one idea leads to another and then combine in different ways, makes it difficult to close a project: "Who's to say whether the waiting for the final piece could open up another whole thing that was meant to be?" (Lynch in Nieland 2012: 168).[2]

It seems that often Lynch uses the terms "fragments" and "ideas" interchangeably. An idea always comes as a fragment. Fragments feed

other fragments, which may eventually compile into something. However, the structure is not decided from the beginning: “When you focus on an idea, even though it’s a fragment, it opens the door to other fragments that want to hook themselves to that idea” (in Douridas 2009 [1997]: 150).

Fragments are of different kinds in Lynch’s recounting of the way he goes about ideas. He talks, for example, about “a certain type of fragments—open-ended fragments”, which “needed a certain type of idea to come in and tie them all together” (in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 284). But elsewhere Lynch describes the fragment as a more contradictory aesthetic form, which is, on the one hand, a self-sufficient entity with a force of its own but on the other hand is also part of a larger aesthetic context: “When you only see a part, it’s even stronger than seeing the whole. The whole might have a logic, but out of its context, the fragment takes on a tremendous value of abstraction” (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 231).

I quoted Lynch on this remark in this book’s Chap. 3 and I return to it again here. While I discussed fragments as abstraction and thought through the close-up as a particular form of fragmentation in Chap. 3, I here wish to make a point of the way Lynch regards the decontextualized, self-sufficient fragment as aesthetically and emotionally powerful: “Ideas come in fragments. Each fragment, though, is full” (Lynch in Barney 2009 [2001]: 242). In the quotation from Rodley’s book, the fragment is not considered open-ended but self-enclosed. In Chap. 2, I drew attention to what I called a “fire fragment”, the close-up of the roaring fire in the fireplace in Fred and Renee’s house in *Lost Highway* . The sound volume and camera distance changed for a short while for no obvious reason—it could not be explained, for example, as Fred’s subjective point of view. These more or less self-contained fragments (delimited but also included in a larger whole) are the kinds of fragment I am interested in in this chapter. I am interested in their spatiality, their condensed aesthetic specificity and their affective atmosphere (Anderson 2009).

Undoubtedly, in Lynch’s many remarks about ideas and fragments, distinctions between the part and the whole are blurred. On the one hand, the fragment is never self-enclosed. It always partakes of a larger whole. On the other hand, the whole is never a coherent bounded whole. As such, the open-ended fragments are tied more or less firmly

together in what could be called a narrative structure, and self-enclosed fragments are tied to the overall narrative but also punctuate it. They function by themselves and have an aesthetic and affective power of their own.

The Fragment in Theory

Across more than two centuries, reading some of early Romantic writer Friedrich Schlegel's fragments is like listening to Lynch: "Every system *grows* out of fragments" (fragment 496 in *Fragmente zur Literatur und Poesie* (Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe XVI 1981: 126—italics in original)).[3] Likewise, Schlegel writes in fragment 808: "All poetic fragments must in some way be parts of a whole" (ibid.: 154).[4] In the same way, reading Lynch statements in interviews is like reading Schlegel aphorisms, like the one cited above: "When you only see a part, it's even stronger than seeing the whole." The following sentence in the same quote sounds as another aphorism: "The whole might have a logic, but out of its context, the fragment takes on a tremendous value of abstraction."[5] I am not arguing that Lynch is, in reality, an early Romantic or see his statements as an expression of the return of the Romantic fragment. However, I am saying that the so-called Jena Romantics' famous fragments around the year 1800 provide an interesting background to understanding David Lynch's way of hardly telling a story or at least not telling a straight-out coherent story.

Both of the above sentences concern the part and the whole or the singular and totality. Hereby, they connect with Schlegel's aphorisms or what he himself called fragments, which were published over a short period between 1797 and 1800 in three different series: *Lyceum* fragments or *Critical* fragments (1797), *Athenäum* fragments (1798) and *Ideas* (1800).[6] Schlegel writes illuminatingly, for example, in one of his *Critical* fragments (no. 14): "In poetry too every whole can be a part and every part really a whole" (Firchow 1971: 144; Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe II: 148).[7] This way of thinking about the part and the whole as complementary instead of mutually exclusive forms, even thinking that there is no whole that is not also a part, also informs the Lynch quotes. Schlegel is occupied with thinking through a system that tones down system and coherence without excluding system and

coherence altogether. Moreover, like Schlegel's writing, Lynch's fragmented speech often takes the form of aphorisms, at least when he is talking about ideas: it consists of compressed thoughts, sometimes hard to understand, often ambiguous but also precise.

The fragment is an exciting, contradictory, short form. It is exciting precisely because of its ambiguity. It questions coherence and totality at the same time as it is in itself an "open totality" (Follett 2011). The fragment is in itself a totality at the same time as it denies totality. It blurs boundaries and draws attention to boundaries. It is at once a part and a whole, it "combines completion and incompletion within itself" (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 1988 [1978]: 50), just like the whole is never closed and finished.

The critical reflections on the fragment I have been inspired by are equally exciting. The following is not an exercise in Schlegel . Neither is it a literature review or an overview of the thinking on the fragment by early German Romanticism. I have picked out some of Schlegel's fragments, which explicitly address the fragment as a textual form and a way of thinking aesthetically—and I will refer to some contemporary reflections upon the fragment as conceptualized by Schlegel. Although thinking on the fragment has primarily come from the fields of literary studies and philosophy, my intention is to use these discussions on the fragment—the part and the whole, the complete and the incomplete—to illuminate aspects of Lynch's work. I use the fragment as a fruitful theoretical tool to think through the ways Lynch opposes textual unity and causality in the classical cinema sense of unity and causality in order to instead create a processual and performative textuality that continuously confronts the viewer/user with short fragments of intensity. The fragments punctuate narrative progression. They unfold in spite of the larger temporal and spatial structure at the same time as their context most often hooks them up to this structure. Discussing Lynch's audio-visual works by way of the fragment illuminates the characteristics of Lynch's "non-genres", which the viewers/audiences themselves have to make sense of one way or another.

Literary scholar Jesper Gulddal (2000) suggests that aphorisms are short and pithy formulations, in contrast to fragments, which are open and incomplete and more seamlessly included in a larger whole. Schlegel's fragments combine the two forms. Many of them were short

and pithy, many were quite long, but his aim was that a fragment should point towards the ideal whole, which to German Romanticism was Antiquity. Yet, again, at the same time Schlegel wanted to reinvent the understanding of this whole, which he rethought as never ending and never definitive but, in a sense, always in the process of becoming, like he writes in the *Athenäum* fragment 116 about poetry in general: "The romantic kind of poetry is still in the state of becoming; that, in fact, is its real essence: that it should forever be becoming and never be perfected." (Firchow 1971: 175; Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe II: 183).[8] Firchow (1971) emphasizes that the *Critical* fragments and the *Athenäum* fragments differ to the extent that the *Critical* fragments more resemble singular disparate aphorisms, whereas the *Athenäum* fragments create an inner network, in which fragments refer to each other. However, what unites the fragments is that they were thought to partly, albeit not radically, contrast the idea so pervasive to the eighteenth-century thinking of a unified rational philosophical system in which everything had its place. As philosopher Olivier Schefer puts it, the fragment "indicates breaks, fissures and an anti-totality but also the attempt to recompose the whole out of disparate pieces" (Schefer 2011: 50). Romanticism, in Schefer's take on the fragment, is rethinking wholeness

> out of the fragments instead of trying to inscribe the parts into a preexisting whole. This is clearly not a question of recovering some wholeness after having lost it but rather a question of reconsidering its nature and its form; similarly, the desire for unity that is paradoxically expressed in fragments is not only manifested in the construction of a totality but in the creation of new modes of linking and joining. (Ibid.)

Formally, the Romantic fragment opposed the universalist thinking at the same time as it supported it, though in a more dispersed and open version—hence the system of assigning consecutive numbers to the fragments; as Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy say, "to write a fragment is to write fragments" (1988 [1978]: 43–44). The fragments were very different in length and content and each of the three collections ended at random. Literary scholar Peter Firchow

argues similarly to what Schefer said above: the fragments were not opposing systems, but they were in favour of *another* system: "[T]he fragments are not against systems, they are a substitute for one, a brilliant substitute, for unlike a fully formulated system they need exclude nothing because it is contradictory, or even self-contradictory" (Firchow 1971: 18).

Schlegel's thinking of the part and the whole, the fragment and the system, was sophisticated. Basically, he wanted to suggest another modern wholeness by writing disparate bits of text that were often contradictory and could not be summarized. A fragment constituted a non-definite whole; in that sense it was always incomplete and vice versa: "Even the largest system is actually only pure fragment" (fragment 930 in *Fragmente Zur Literatur und Poesie*, Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe XVI: 163).[9]

Most explicitly, Schlegel wrote in the much-cited *Athenäum* fragment 206 that "[a] fragment, like a miniature work of art, has to be entirely isolated from the surrounding world and be complete in itself like a porcupine" (Firchow 1971: 189; Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe II: 197).[10] This definition sounds like the definition of an aphorism. Yet, the use of the metaphor "porcupine" is quite remarkable. It adds to this seemingly straightforward description of the fragment ("complete in itself" [in sich selbst vollendet]) a sense of ambiguity, something pricking that prevents intrusion but also radiates in all directions well aware of and into its surrounding. This is the way I will approach fragments in Lynch's production: I see them as small, condensed centres of aesthetic and emotional intensity within the context of a larger textuality.

Schlegel lamented somewhat sarcastically that wholes are the result of not paying attention to the parts: "Those surveys of entire subjects of the sort that are now fashionable are the result of somebody overlooking all the individual items, and then summarizing" (*Athenäum* fragment 72).[11] Moreover, he wrote in a part of *Gespräch über die Poesie* from approximately the same time (Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe II: 340):

> It is not possible to understand a part by itself, i.e., it is unwise to want to consider only a part in detail. But the whole is not yet

finalized; and therefore, all knowledge of the whole remains only approximation and piecemeal.[12]

It appears clearly from the quote that Schlegel did not consider the whole a finished entity—"the whole is not yet finalized". Therefore, a work can only be interpreted roughly and not as a unity. As Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy (1988 [1978]) suggested: the totality of fragments does not make a whole but in a sense replicates a whole.

In *Athenäum* fragment 259 Schlegel described fragments as "[m]arginal glosses to the text of the age" (Firchow 1971: 199; Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe II: 209).[13] Gulddal (2000) explains that the statement refers to the position of the fragments within the wider intellectual and cultural landscape of the time. Many of the fragments are difficult to understand because they comment upon other critical texts and thoughts that were occupying intellectuals (philosophers and literary critics). Therefore, Gulddal warns that it is hard to capture the entirety of their rich meaning without knowledge of the texts or the discussions they are referring to. Understood as marginal notes, they do not require the completeness Schlegel is suggesting in *Athenäum* fragment 206, but they demand the spines or barbs that enable them to actually participate in the text of their time. By being "marginal glosses to the text of the age", Schlegel saw the fragments as continuing and expanding on the thinking of his time. Even though the quote may seem to place Schlegel and his circle of intellectuals in a modest position at the margins and diminish the importance of the fragment as a textual form, he also positioned the fragments as conveyors of prickly, challenging thinking and final words.

Schlegel's thinking of the whole and the part was ambiguous in the sense that he proposed a new and contemporary, more dynamic and fragmented communicative form and at the same time looked for its ideal proponents in classic antiquity. Obviously fragment 812 in *Fragmente zur Literatur und Poesie* proposes a thinking together of the contemporary, modern with the classical: "The form of the fragments is the pure form of the classical, the progressive and the urban" (Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe XVI: 154).[14] In Schlegel's take on the fragment, it was at once an aesthetic form of communication, a mirror of a certain spirit of the age and a comment on his time. The fragments

matched the era of burgeoning mass media and periodicals. An issue of a periodical could be filled with as many or as few of the short text form as was fit, and as a short form, the fragment emitted a sense of the here and now. Fragments were comments (political, ironic, literary, philosophical) on contemporary events, and they were quick and transitory. As Germanist Justus Fetscher understands it, the early Romanticist fragments "manifest and record the impulses and tendencies of the present moment" (Fetscher 2011). But they were also meant by Schlegel to provoke reflections.

Since early Romanticism, the term has been taken up by writers from Nietzsche to Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin, Adorno, Derrida and Roland Barthes (see Ostermann 1991). Not least because of Schlegel's reflections upon literature and a "universal poetry" (*Athenäum* fragment 116), the term has been connected with contemporary discussions on *das Gesamtkunstwerk* (see, for example, Finger and Follett 2011; Munch 2012). However, I will end this part of the chapter by referring to French philosopher and literary theorist Maurice Blanchot's reflections on Schlegel and Swedish literary critic Horace Engdahl's (1992 [1988]) fragments about the fragment. Engdahl's text touches upon Schlegel and Novalis but also includes more contemporary reflections on the term and advances some pointed notes on the fragment as an oppositional form.[15]

Maurice Blanchot criticized Schlegel's fragmentary form for "complacent self-indulgence rather than the attempt to elaborate a more rigorous mode of writing" (Blanchot 1983 [1969]: 172). Hence, Blanchot argues that Schlegel "aligns the fragment with the aphorism, with the closure of a perfect sentence" (ibid.). Instead Blanchot wishes more progressively, "to make possible new relations that exempt themselves from unity, as they exceed the whole" (ibid.).

Blanchot lists three understandings of the fragment, of which the first, in his opinion, is Schlegel's : the aphorism, the demarcated, closed form (unity). The second is the fragment understood in its relationship with other fragments (totality). The third understanding, which to Blanchot, despite his harsh criticism of Schlegel , is not far from what Schlegel actually grappled with, is a form that was neither closed nor open, "a search for a new form of fulfilment that mobilizes—renders mobile—the whole, even while interrupting it in various ways"

(Blanchot 1983 [1969]: 171). Eloquently, Schlegel formulates a similar thought in the following way in Critical fragment 47: “Whoever desires the infinite doesn’t know what he desires. But one can’t turn this sentence around” (Kritische Schlegel Ausgabe II: 153).[16]

Blanchot’s rebuttal of Schlegel’s *Athenäum* fragment 206 (the article’s English translators use the word “hedgehog”) is read somewhat against the grain. Even though it seems like “the closure of a perfect sentence”, the fragment still includes the “surrounding world”, as advanced by Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy (1988 [1978]). Moreover, there is still the strange metaphor to consider. The porcupine certainly closes in on itself, but its quilled, pricking fur also displays an awareness of being in a context as I claimed above. So Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy formulate elegantly the intertwining of the part and the whole: “Each fragment stands for itself and for that from which it is detached” (1988 [1978]: 44).

Horace Engdahl emphasizes that there is no safe way to distinguish the fragment from other kinds of texts. It is not about a particular style, let alone about briefness. To Engdahl, the fragment is characterized by its ability to “write in the fissures between culture’s fields of enunciation” (ibid.: 55). To a certain extent, he hereby connects with Schlegel’s thinking about writing at the margins. As I read this central passage in Engdahl’s text, he imagines a textual form that can both detect the cracks in culture’s seeming coherence and use these cracks as an eruptive space to communicate in a different language. Therefore, Engdahl can declare that “the fragment is there, suddenly, like an event” (ibid.: 44). It erupts, surprises and overwhelms. Consequently, Engdahl regards the fragment as an emancipating form: “a writing outside of generic constraints and a thinking outside of the prescribed [påbjudna] universality” (ibid.: 59). Fragmentation liberates the mind to Engdahl: “The fragment is determined to make possible unlimited rearrangement of the regions of thought” (ibid.: 61).

In line with Schlegel , Engdahl argues that a fragment seldom stands alone. On the other hand, he calls a series of fragments a contradiction in the sense that using the term “series” implies some kind of generic similarity as well as a kind of system. All the same, he elegantly solves this contradiction by suggesting that the succession of the parts that

together compose a fragment series is not linear. In a way, he says, the fragments “are separated by an eternity” (ibid.: 45).

Engdahl looks at the fragment as a sign of the times, but also as a form that can be looked upon differently by different audiences. From the first point of view, the fragment is “a text that is infected by the disorder of its time, in contrast to the system that is spatial and logical” (ibid.: 54). From the second point of view and bearing in mind Engdahl’s accentuation of the fragment as a *non-genre*—an unruly form that can take many different shapes—the fragment denies clues to its reading and should not, by and large, be interpreted. “The fragment should not be approached through interpretation. Rather, it demands ‘complement’ or ‘experiment’ (ibid.: 55)”. The fragment does not explain. “It is rather a way to respond to [omgås] both the unknown and what is too obvious” (ibid.: 61). Engdahl makes it clear that the fragment is not a system’s or structure’s Other. However, what brings together Engdahl’s different arguments about the fragment is the idea, inspired by Schlegel , that it challenges our way of thinking of systems and order. Engdahl’s text may be summed up as an argument about the instability inherent in order and systems. The fragment is a form that points at the cracks lying dormant in systems. Therefore, by its mere non-form it functions as a challenging undercurrent to the ordering of systems. Not least, the fragment is also a means to push forward thinking and reflection both about the unknown and the too well known.

What makes it so interesting to compare the early nineteenth-century thinking about the fragment and Lynch’s works is the shared occupation with the dialectic relationship between the part and the whole. It is the mutual recognition that the whole (a work, a string of thinking, an idea) is never a whole. It is the identical denial of the definite, the denial of coherence and a focus on process and becoming. It is the occupation with condensed (aesthetic) expressions. The difference between Lynch and Schlegel’s thinking of the fragment is that Schlegel was embedded in the occupation with system and entirety in his time and from that position tried to think of system in a different manner. As for Lynch, his work is, as I see it, a continuous exploration of a world without a whole or a centre.

Obviously not the Romantic writers but neither more contemporary reflections on the fragment have been interested in the relationship between the fragment and emotionality or affect. So, in order to grasp the affective atmosphere specific to David Lynch's fragments, how they have an aesthetic and affective value of their own, I return to my discussion on atmospheres in the first chapter and add that Lynch's fragments are characterized by constituting spaces with intense affective atmospheres.

Tonino Griffero (2010: 27) says that "atmospheres are spatialized feelings […] they are the specific emotional quality of a given 'lived space'". The spatialized feelings in Lynch's fragments often have a particular intense form. In the second chapter I discussed atmospheres as a fluid, indeterminate relationship between things and people in the exhibitional installation . Although in different ways, Böhme, Schmitz and Anderson regard atmospheres as spaces of distributed intensity/affect . Even though Böhme considers atmospheres as free-floating exchanges (with an emphasis on exchange), the mentioned thinking recalls Brian Massumi's understanding of *affect* as a mobile non-signifying intensity. Affect is therefore not the same as emotions, which are more specific—what Massumi calls "identified intensity" (1992: 61), but affect can be given a specific emotional content, for example when attached to characters.[17] In *Wild at Heart*, for example, which I will come to shortly, Lula and Sailor are blind to anything but their passion. But at the level of enunciation, the film attaches an affective layer to the two main protagonists by means of the repetition of tableau-like postures. So, even though affect can be experienced as an unformed diffusion of intensity across an image surface, as we shall see below, it can also be formed by way of filmic strategies such as music, camera distance and camera movement.[18] On the other hand, this does not mean that affect is assigned a specific meaning beyond being felt as an intensity of atmosphere.

The "Dance for Freedom" Fragment and the "Dying Girl" Fragment in *Wild at Heart*

The fragments in *Wild at Heart* at once express and enhance affect and excessive emotionality. Apart from *Twin Peaks: The Return*, *Wild at Heart* (1990) is maybe the most fragmented of Lynch's filmic works. It is "largely a film of instants, memorable spectacles" (Brinkema 2014: 141). This structure of affective instants goes hand in hand with the film's emphasis on suppressed passed incidents, half-memories and half-truths. Recurrent fragments include the close-ups of fire burning violently behind a broken window. They are brief flashes of memory connected with Lula, which are evoked on different occasions but bear no meaning in themselves—just like the fire fragment in *Lost Highway* I described in Chap. 2. They function as affective flashes, eruptions from Lula's archive of hardly comprehensible memories.

Fragmentation is the very structuring principle in this film, and it corresponds formally with the problem that is both Sailor's and Lula's: Lula's fragmented incomplete recollection and lack of knowledge of what actually happened to her beloved father and her mother's complicity in his death a long time ago; and likewise, Sailor's witnessing of a fire that he could not understand. However, the fragment of fire and a broken window[19] is just one of several recurrent fire fragments in the film that the excessive widescreen images of flames in the title sequence forebode. There are also the repeated ultra-close-ups of the burning tip of a cigarette and matches being struck. As magnification has deprived everyday objects of their familiarity and their meaning, they appear as outbursts, abstract signifiers of intensity. Other memorable fragments include Sailor's singing of Elvis Presley songs (on the floor in a club and on the bonnet of a car), and the many short, stylized, tableau-like images of Lula and Sailor in dramatic poses are in the nature of fragments. Like muted texts (to refer to Peter Brooks's (1985) writing about the tableau),[20] in which bodies speak affectively instead of dialogue, so do these "body fragments". One example is the wordless shot of Lula and Sailor dressed in black, standing in a black room somewhere in front of a shining jukebox. With a melodramatic, stylized gesture, Sailor puts Lula's hand on his heart, while Gene Vincent's "Be Bop a Lu La" plays on the jukebox.

Many fragments in *Wild at Heart* are characterized by excess — excessive magnification, excessive fire, excessive use of the voice, excessive bodily postures, excessive camera angles. Moreover, many

fragments have a tableau-like affective quality, which radiates from Lula's and Sailor's expressions of emotion. The fragment form at once condenses and widens the intensity of their emotionality—across and beyond their posturing bodies. Emotionality radiates from their bodies and spreads across the image as an affective atmosphere.

The excessive emotion could even be said to spread from Lula and Sailor and put pressure on the image frame. We see this in a short "Dance for Freedom" fragment of Lula and Sailor in the sunset—after Lula has in desperation stopped the car and asked Sailor to find some music on the radio instead of the reports on violent incidents that keep sounding each time she switches channel.[21] Additionally, the excessive, beautiful, ultra-long shot that concludes the fragment enhances the affective atmosphere in the image: on Lula's demand, Sailor at last tunes into "Slaughterhouse" performed by metal band *Powermad*, whom they have heard live in a club a little earlier. They run into the nearby field, and while the camera slowly lifts above them, they scream and move violently to the music in the red-yellow light of the descending sun, as if to get the violence Lula heard about out of their bodies. After a short pause, the camera moves further upwards, while the music changes from the diegetic hard rock on the car radio to Richard Strauss's "Im Abendrot" and Lula and Sailor stop their wild body movements and embrace. After a medium close-up of their passionate embrace in front of the red line of the sunset and the sun reaching the horizon behind them, there is a dissolve to an excessive wide-angle shot of the vast fields and the bending of the planet in the sunset while the violins continue playing the Strauss music.

If this fragment is "a marginal gloss to the text of the age" it may be seen as a writing and a lifting off of the discomfort in (media) culture. In contrast to the violence and sexual perversities Lula has tried to avoid listening to, the fragment offers a vision of sublime boundlessness, of freedom and vigorous youthfulness. The final sublime image (which I also mention in Chap. 7) and the violins' other-worldliness in a sense release Sailor and Lula from their material existence and transport them into a kind of peaceful transcendence where no evil can reach them. The fragment moreover draws attention to film as a language that is able to create this kind of vision of limitlessness. Just as the close-up can magnify matches and cigarettes

and provide the well known with a disturbing unfamiliarity, extreme wide-angle images of a limitless nature can create a highly affective atmosphere beyond beautiful. Form (framing and camera angle, colour and music) thus creates the intensity that emanates from the image by the end of the fragment. The grand super-total makes possible an affective sensibility that transcends Lula and Sailor's emotions. It reminds us, to return to Brian Massumi's thinking of affect (2002), that affect is indeterminate and impersonal. Affect, according to Massumi, does not belong to certain subjects like emotions and may therefore be a more pervasive but also ungraspable strong sensation attached to space. In this scene, affect spreads across the image as an atmospheric surplus that pushes on the image boundaries. And vice versa, the extreme long shot in itself creates affect.

However, the melancholic Strauss music adds to this powerful sublimity and sense of freedom a feeling of sorrow and death (see also Davison 2004): the lyrics to the music, which is not audible in the film, end with the following verse: "Oh weiter stille Friede!/So tief im Abendrot/Wie sind wir wandermüde—/ist dies etwa der Tod?" The fragment is "complete in itself", to quote Schlegel , and it stands as an affective moment, a hymn to freedom amidst violence and death. However, the scene, which concludes with this short but grandiose fragment of Lula and Sailor as small human beings amidst the grandiosity of the sun disappearing behind the curved horizon, is embedded within two scenes with Marietta, the wicked, murderous mother.

The fragment constitutes a single moment of dizzying freedom and transcendence released from the violent and material here and now. As a stand-alone form, the fragment in a sense protects this ecstatic vision of freedom that the film by many other means denies. Nonetheless, despite the fragment's hymn to freedom, it partakes of the whole by suggesting that the beauty in nature and the power of love are connected with death. The *Lied* asks "ist dies etwa der Tod?" and thereby, it connects with the following scene from Lula and Sailor's road trip, the incident with the car accident and the dying young woman.

The "Dying Girl" fragment is a death eulogy. It suddenly appears, as Engdahl says, in the dark, literally out of nowhere, like an event in all its

strange difference, constituted as a tableau of darkness and light, red and black, life and death, accompanied by the tone of spinning car wheels and fragile piano and guitar notes. Lula and Sailor are offered no other position than being spectators to this spectacle of another, disrupted order that writes in the margins of contemporary consumer and driving culture. As for the approach to the fragment, which is one of the most memorable moments in the film, I follow Engdahl and "complement", that is, I aim to paraphrase the fragment reflectively instead of "interpreting" it.

Lula desperately lamented the constant news about necrophilia and crocodiles being thrown into a river to eat corpses: "Is this the night of the living fucking dead!" she screamed and stopped the car. However, in the night in the desert, close to a Joshua tree, after Sailor told Lula that he witnessed the killing of her father and they have established a fragile equilibrium, they encounter death for real. The fragment starts with an image of the road in the headlights and ends with the car's red rear lights disappearing in the dark. The incident is only mentioned again on two occasions: when one of the strange people in Big Tuna, the small town in the middle of nowhere they had been heading for, reads aloud from the newspaper about the accident and when Lula tells Sailor in their shabby motel room: "I hope seeing that girl die didn't jinx us." The fragment does not add to the narrative development but contributes with an at once poetic, beautiful and horrible imagery of an almost sacred and totally private other-worldly moment between life and the inevitable death. Sailor wants to take the dying girl to the hospital, but not only is it too late, it is also truly inappropriate, notwithstanding his good intentions. The girl is in a liminal space where she cannot be reached, and her aggressive refusal to allow him to touch her tells him that they already belong to different realms.

Lula and Sailor realize that something has gone awfully wrong when they discover clothes scattered on the road in the dark in front of them and a light on the roadside ahead. When they reach the site of the accident, they pass an invisible threshold to a space of otherness, which they are part of and excluded from at one and the same time. This "elsewhere-ness" is emphasized by frail guitar notes from Chris Isaak's "Wicked Game", which return when they leave the space again. The

delicate guitar sounds and the car's approaching and leaving the site of the accident demarcate the fragment.

While they look at the dead bodies lying on the ground beside the overturned car a girl comes out of the darkness behind the stems of the Joshua tree (similarly to the way other people materialize from the darkness in Lynch's works). She wears a black top and blue jeans, and her lips are of the same red colour as the blood that runs down the right part of her face and upper body. The young woman keeps repeating desperately that she cannot find her purse with her wallet and all her (credit) cards. "It was in my pocket!" she cries desperately, putting her hand down her jeans pocket, but "now my pocket's gone." Her desperation also includes her mother, whom she repeatedly says will kill her when she finds out that she has lost the wallet.

When she approaches Lula and Sailor, she lifts a short piece of metal thread towards them and says, as if she wanted to explain something, "[t]his bobby pin". After she has refused Sailor's help and angrily called out for "Robert"—like she and Robert were in the middle of an everyday quarrel—faint piano tunes sound while she starts scratching her scalp and repeats in a close-up: "I have this sticky stuff in my hair." She turns toward Sailor who looks at her sorrowfully, well knowing what she does not seem to (want to) know, and as she falls to the ground, she cries for her hairbrush. In her dying moment, lying on the ground in a medium-close-up, blood comes out of her mouth and she whispers: "Get my lipstick. It's in my purse." With blood running out of her mouth, she seems to be addressing an important moment in everyday life and clinging to life, even in her moment of death: brushing her hair and painting her lips. In another way too, the fragment stages the blurring of boundaries between life and death in this liminal space: the blood and her red lips are exactly the same colour.

Sailor rises from the dead girl and says, "Let's get out of here, honey," while Lula cries desperately and throws herself into his arms—in stark contrast to the embrace of love and freedom in the previous fragment. Their embrace is an embrace of desperation and of being trapped in the scaringly unknown. Sailor's remark is an apt expression of this fatal in-between space as an enclosure of otherness in the middle of the vast desert. It also captures the sense of this site as a space, a "here" they can "get out of". The fatal space is demarcated by

the overturned car, the clicking wheels still turning and the headlights still on. Lula and Sailor crossed a threshold to this space, but they are alive and can therefore choose to "get out of" it again. When Sailor has escorted the crying Lula to the car, he lights a cigarette. Smoking and lighting a cigarette are token props in the film. Smoking is an intuitive everyday activity, and Sailor's gesture, before he gets into the car, is an expression of his escape from the uncanny space of death and a wished-for return to everyday normality. However, the cigarette and the matchstick, elsewhere in the film magnified and made strange in close-ups, are also signs of the violence that is the dark side to the everyday.

The "Dying Girl" fragment adds to the critical writing of postmodern culture and contributes "marginal glosses" to its time. In *America*, Jean Baudrillard wrote about speed, and the desert as the epitome of America as the scene of simulation. The book was published in 1986, just a few years before *Wild at Heart* came out. In it, Baudrillard writes: "Speed creates a space of initiation, which may be lethal; its only rule is to leave no trace behind. Triumph of forgetting over memory, an uncultivated, amnesic intoxication" (1999 [1986]: 6). He also wrote that "driving is a spectacular form of amnesia. Everything is to be discovered, everything to be obliterated" (1999 [1986]: 9). Indeed, speed and driving is lethal in *Wild at Heart* and in this scene, it leaves traces behind. Moreover, driving to Lula and Sailor is a spectacular form of amnesia. Nevertheless, their past life pursues them and the many shots in which the camera looks in on them from the outside and frames them within the confines of the windshield hint at a journey going nowhere . Their surroundings keep pushing in on them, not least here in the desert confronted with the dying girl. The desert is also, in Baudrillard's thinking, an "extensive banality" (1999 [1986]: 9), the essence of the levelling and disappearance of meaning that symbolizes America in his postmodern thinking. The desert is a space turned into non-space, hyperreal nothingness in Baudrillard's book. However, in Lynch, the desert is rather a fatal place of death. In *Lost Highway* , the desert is a space where time can be rewound, and a burning house can regorge its flames. The desert is a place where one person can be transformed into another person and killing can take place. And the desert is the scene of a fatal car accident in *Wild at Heart*.[22]

But in *Wild at Heart*, this elegy to death is also, in a paradoxical way, a hymn to the life the dying girl refers to when she asks for her lipstick. The space of otherness in the darkness is anything but Baudrillard's idea of the "extensive banality" of deserts. Lula's mother Marietta's red lips, whose perfect line is more important than intimacy ("no tongue—my lipstick," she warns Johnnie Farragut), are the lips of a black angel (which Lula calls Bobby Peru later in the film). Marietta is closer to a made-up corpse than the dying girl is. The "Dying Girl" fragment is surrounded by two scenes of evil: crime and death. Thus, the framing contributes to also making this death elegy into a tribute to the rituals of ordinary beauty of which life consists.

Four Kinds of Fragments

I now turn to examples of fragments in Lynch's works and primarily in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, which I called the ultimate fragmented Lynch text above. The series has, since its premiere on Showtime on May 21, 2017, continuously been referred to as "fragmented" (see Sanna (ed.) 2019). This regards its incoherent narrative structure—"layers of stories within stories within stories that blend and fragment in unexpected ways" (Galow 2019: 212)—its weird spatial leaps and temporal discontinuities, its stories that do not offer closure (like Audrey's (lack of) story and the ending of the final episode, which I discussed in Chap. 3) and its multiplied characters like Cooper/Mr C/Dougie. This incoherent structure can, as suggested by Timothy Galow (2019: 208), "be viewed either as fragments or as supplements of an elusive whole". There are characters that turn out to be other characters (like Naido somehow disclosing Diane inside of her). There are characters with "Doppelgängers" or "tulpas"—artificially constructed replicates/replicants—like Dougie to whom Mike reveals when Dougie suddenly drops into The Black Lodge that "someone manufactured you—for a purpose".

There is an abundance of split subjectivities in *Twin Peaks: The Return*. Altogether, the fragmented series and its many fragments create an image of a confusing, incoherent and impossible to understand contemporary world. Simultaneously, the series refrains from offering a unifying point of view from where to comprehend this fragmentation,

which is what makes viewing such an awesome and exhausting experience at one and the same time.

"Fragment" and "fragmentation" is not completely the same thing. Fragmentation refers to a textual structure. A fragment, on the other hand, is a textual figure, which, by means of its internally coherent and relatively closed form and its loose connection to the overall narrative, contributes spaces of intensity to this pattern of fragmentation. Fragments create by aesthetic means secluded spatialities throughout Lynch's works. The fragment is, to the extent that it must be distinctive —otherwise it would not be a fragment—dependent on a context. Therefore, it is difficult to systematize Lynch's fragments. Nevertheless, I argue that significant Lynch fragments could broadly speaking be of the following four different kinds—all of which have an exclusive spatiality as a common characteristic. First, a Lynch fragment can be constituted by a more familiar space that is *destabilized* and starts acting in unpredictable ways or acquires a tableau-like unfamiliarity. Second, a Lynch fragment can be characterized by constituting an other-worldly or dreamlike *anywhere*. The dying girl and her dark desert space in *Wild at Heart* is one example of *an other-worldly fragment*.

Third, a Lynch fragment can constitute an *ornamented or veiled imagery*. Spaces are often elusive and fluid in Lynch's work. As Richard Martin writes, "heavily prescribed places are ripe for distortion; environments carrying excessive symbolic weight are liable to shatter" (Martin 2014: 14). The aesthetic strategy of veiling may on the face of it be a way of showing such spatial elusiveness. Yet, veiling creates its own detached, emotional space, which is constituted by layers of transparent images. The space created in this kind of fragment may be psychological, inner rather than physical, whereas the fourth Lynch fragment may consist of a *staged spectacle*. This is either situated on an actual stage (like the ending of the majority of the *Twin Peaks: The Return* episodes or Rebekah del Rio's and Isabella Rossellini's singing in *Mulholland Drive* and *Blue Velvet* , respectively), or is a sudden unmotivated appearance like the "Locomotion" performance in *Inland Empire* or the end credit fragment also in *Inland Empire* .

Besides these kinds of fragments, distinguishable by aesthetic differences and the intensity—of different kinds—they convey, the

addition of *extra material* to many of Lynch's DVD editions enhances the impression of a total Lynch work, which consists of fragments of different length in different media. Extra material includes interviews with the director and with actors, documentaries from the production set, deleted scenes, small films and recordings with Lynch doing different things. Some of the material creates connections and expands on the story, like the so-called "Twin Peaks—the Missing Pieces", which is a collection of deleted scenes from *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* — included in the Criterion Edition of *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* as well as the DVD box set *Twin Peaks: The Entire Mystery* (see Hallam 2018). Other collections of fragments include, most notably, the 75-minute collection called *More Things That Happened* on the two-disc *Inland Empire* DVD. *More Things That Happened* includes, among other things, fragments of "Susan's" long monologue to a mostly listening Mr. K (interrogator or analyst?), scenes with the Lost Girl and the Phantom, a monologue with Nastassja Kinski and Laura Dern as Nikki Grace listening, a couple of fragments of the pregnant "Susan" and her husband in everyday quarrels and a longer scene with the prostitutes on a Los Angeles street.

The title of this collection is somewhat ironic, as nothing really happens in the fragments. Much of it consists of atmosphere filled dialogue scenes and does not add new meaning to the film. Neither does it help solve mysteries. Indeed, Lynch has himself ventured that *More Things That Happened* "gives you more room to dream and to wonder about certain things" (Barney 2009 [2008]: 263). Each part functions as a separate fragment, which is not included in the whole, even though that might have initially been the intention. On the other hand, they are only fragments because of a whole in which they were never parts. These deleted or never used shots may come closest to Schlegel's definition of the fragment in fragment 206 as a miniature "entirely isolated from the surrounding world […] complete in itself like a porcupine" and they each convey a strong intensity.

The "Las Vegas" Fragment

What I call the "Las Vegas" fragment at the beginning of Episode 4 in *Twin Peaks: The Return* takes place in the slot machine hall in a casino

and is an example of the making strange of a delimited rule-governed space. The casino is presented as a miniature version of the capitalist system; however, the fragment also constitutes the gaming hall as a mirror of the fragility of such a system, once a radically disturbing force gains entrance to it. The fragment opens with Cooper/Dougie going from the outside through the revolving doors to the guarded inside of a casino. He has difficulties understanding the revolving doors, which is, of course, a sign of his mental state but also draws attention to the door as a threshold. This *other space* is utterly strange to the confused man. In here, he creates total chaos in the slot machine hall by disturbing the monetary logic—the distribution of the accumulation and spending of money between two distinct actors, the owners and the players, respectively.

Baudrillard argues that the Las Vegas space and its gaming enclosures have "a desert form, inhuman, uncultured, initiatory, a challenge to the natural economy of value, a crazed activity on the fringes of exchange (Baudrillard (1999 [1986]): 128). Cooper/Dougie is the innocent fool who disturbs the already "crazed activity" in this capitalist hall of mirrors. Apparently, he can detect which machines give immediate Jackpot and he helps an old bag lady choose the right machines. Involuntarily he rebels against the exploitative system built into the machines and by demolishing its logic he turns the gaming space into an unruly inferno of coins rolling and noises of the Jackpots (which, significantly, sounds like alarms). Cooper/Dougie does not understand the space he interrupts and leaves the coins in the slot machine each time he has hit the Jackpot. However, his unruly presence crates a breach in an exploitative system—and its assistants see to it that he is expelled from the gaming space.

The "Floating Cube" Fragment in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Episode 3

As for the other-worldly fragment in the "Mauve Zone"[23] in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, it forms as a journey into a fantastic space. At the opening of Episode 3, Cooper lands on a cube, which, as it turns out, is floating somewhere in between the vast ocean and the immense starlit space.

To Cooper, this space is a transit space from which he will be transported onwards to merge with the unfaithful, somewhat flabby insurance agent Dougie Jones. Additionally, we meet the eerie Naido, with her eyes stitched together. Naido remains a mystery in this episode; she does not appear again until Episode 14 and in Episode 17 she turns out to be—or host—the real Diane. The sublime feeling of awe that this fragment invites is caused by a range of distortions of scale, of the use of colour (nuances of lilac and mauve primarily) and of a kind of stop motion technique, in which tiny fragments of movements are briefly repeated, accompanied by a shuffling sound, as if moving was somehow impossible. Additionally, the fragment uses an extraordinary boundary-blurring aesthetic that linger somewhere in between drawn, painted and filmed images. There are unexpected and awesome long shots, and finally, this weird and breath-taking fragment is almost wordless. Together, these image experiments create the strange atmosphere of spatial other-worldliness.

The fragment starts like Episode 2 ended, as Cooper is whirling involuntarily through dark air, presumably away from the Black Lodge. Everything shakes, images are blurred, Cooper at times seems to whirl into the camera, and the surrounding darkness is filled with white spots and lines. Then his face slowly turns lilac as he is forced to pass through a lilac foamy substance that keeps multiplying—formally this part is reminiscent of the nuclear bomb explosion and the camera's movement towards the cloud in Episode 7—although not by way of matter and colour.

There is a cut to more or less the complete opposite figure—a massive lilac surface that fills the entire screen and looks like a segment of a large building, constructed of metal or concrete. After a few seconds without anything happening on this seemingly flat lilac surface, Cooper falls downwards into the image and lands, presumably on a ledge. This movement in the otherwise static image finally confers upon the strange structure an idea of scale: It is huge apparently, as Cooper looks like a tiny figure in front of the building. When he subsequently looks out and downwards from the ledge, he sees far below him, as do we, the vast lilac ocean under the slightly shining dark lilac sky. Like in a dystopian science fiction novel, it feels as if the lilac darkness will never disappear and the building is completely isolated.

Upon entering the dark room, which has a vaulted ceiling and light coming from a fireplace and a few lamps—as if he had entered a crypt under a castle—Cooper catches sight of a woman, whose eyes are stitched together with pieces of skin and flesh. She is a porcelain doll-looking woman in a shining purple velvet dress who seems unable to talk except for some faint groaning. When Cooper approaches her, they both seem to be caught by the stopping of time in a series of split seconds. It is as if time collapses, which makes it hard for them to move towards each other in this weird space in which usual time-space coordinates seem to be out of order.

A long shot shows the cavernous, yet marvellous room, and the bewildered-looking Cooper talks for the first and last time during the fragment's duration of around nine minutes. He asks, just as the viewer would like to know: "Where is this? Where are we?" Notably, Cooper does not say, "Where am I?" as if he did not feel like an "I" placed involuntarily in a strange space, as if the space might engulf what "I" there was. Neither does he say, "What is this?" The question he poses accentuates that space is of importance to the constitution of the fragment but also that space is contextually defined. It also accentuates that a fragment's space is remarkable in some—mysterious, unfamiliar, powerful—ways and is distinctive by its particular affective atmosphere. The lack of dialogue in this extended fragment furthermore accentuates the strangeness and out-of-place-ness of the space.

Cooper may get some sort of an answer as the woman—for some reason panicked by Cooper approaching an electrical device on a wall—forces him to follow her out of a door and up a ladder. Simultaneously, someone—or something—has started pounding forcefully on one of the walls. The sound is metallic, and the pounding creates a couple of small bumps in the wall—reminiscent of the sculptural surface on which Lynch's first work was projected. The blinded woman is seen opening a hatch, and in the next shot we see the hatch being opened from the outside and the woman in the purple dress stepping off the ladder.

What is revealed in this shot is Cooper and the woman standing on top of a dark cube floating in the middle of the starlit space (Illustration 6.2). So, the answer to Cooper's question seems to be "Somewhere".

There is no spatial anchoring to the cube, no limit to the space in which it floats. The image of the small cube with the two persons on top of it, so much smaller than its inner scale seemed to suggest, therefore yields at once a frightening sense of boundlessness and an awesome sense of the unimaginable. So, maybe a more correct answer to the question would be “Nowhere”.

Illustration 6.2 Framegrab from *Twin Peaks: The Return*, the Mauve Zone

The fragment is an experiment with the visualization of limitlessness and how to push visuality beyond the narrow bounds of the image frame: after Cooper’s vertiginous fall through air, we first saw an extraordinary image of a wall that seems to continue far beyond the image frame. The second grandiose and vertiginous view in this fragment was of Cooper looking at the dark waves far below him, which confirmed the feeling of the immensity of the construction on which he stood. Finally, the third sublime shot adds another surprising and awesome view regarding not only “where” but also “what”. In contrast to what we would have expected, the woman and Cooper are not stepping into another room in a building firmly standing on the ground but are out on the top of a metallic cube, which floats in the dark starlit space and is dimly lit by the stars or a moon. In contrast to the first

view, which provided an impression of a huge structure, in front of which Cooper became tiny, the cube from which the camera in this first view slightly tracks away is small and can hardly make room for the two on the top. The next medium close-up shows the slight bumping of the cube in deep dark space while Cooper and the woman try to stay erect by holding on to a metal bar.

This outside shot forces the viewer to reconsider the previous part from the inside of the cube. Ocean has been supplanted by space, large scale by small scale, grounding by floating, as if the cube were a spaceship advancing on its slow route to infinity. This sense of sublime spatial limitlessness is accentuated when the woman pulls a lever on the side of a large strange "thing", which stands on the top of the cube. Reminiscent of the electrifying levers pulled by the "Man in the Planet" in *Eraserhead* , the result is the electrification of the "thing", the waves of which send the woman catapulting out and down into the vast dark where she disappears.

If the fragment is defined by being at once part of a whole and "complete in itself", it stops here, after approximately nine minutes, with the blinded woman credited as Naido whirling through the dark. Similarly, yet more violently, it opened with Cooper bouncing frenetically through the dark—be it space or a vast void. The first series of images in the fragment recalls a dystopian vision of a world of eternal darkness, in which flooding has made it impossible for mankind to live except in constructions high above the water (reminiscent of similar images of the future in contemporary climate fiction). The second series of images on top of the cube lean more on science fiction imagery—a solitary cube that seems to float without purpose and with no explanation whatsoever as to its existence. Both series of images are beautiful and frightening in all their boundlessness. The first has a gloomy tone to it whereas the second is more dizzyingly sublime. The spatial dimensions are made strange in both, however.

While the "Las Vegas" fragment and the fragments from *Wild at Heart* may be seen as "marginal glosses to the text of the age", I regard this fragment as more of a perceptual disturbance. It adds to the way Lynch's works in general disturb the habitual, forcing us to see differently, to challenge, for example, habits of perceiving and making meaning of space. Richard Martin says in his book about architecture in

Lynch that "[w]hile watching Lynch's films, spatial awareness is both demanded and undermined" (2014: 2). I think this is what this fragment does. It challenges our sense of space and of being immersed in space by creating immense, awe-inducing proportions. In so doing, it shakes our perceptual habits.[24]

Cooper returns to the vaulted room from the top of the cube and finds a woman in a red sweater who enigmatically tells him in a way reminiscent of the backwards language used in the Black Lodge that "when you get there, you will already be there". This may not be that hard to understand given that Cooper has two resembling incarnations. A close-up on her watch shows that it is not able to move on from the enigmatic time 2:53, and her urging Cooper to leave is followed by a cut to Bad Cooper in his car at the exact same time seemingly experiencing a dizzy spell and losing control of his car.[25] The cross-cutting between the two incarnations of Cooper does not provide any clear knowledge. But it can be thought to make sense considering earlier remarks on "one coming in" in order for "another to go out" of the Black Lodge. Bad Cooper's dizzy spell could hence be thought of as the working of an inner (evil) force intended to catapult Cooper back to the Black Lodge, because otherwise Bad Cooper might end there himself. This succeeded only partly. Bad Cooper ended up in jail, whereas Cooper, for his part, turned into a confused husband in a Las Vegas suburb with wife, a son and a job in an insurance company. The scene in the vaulted room ends with Cooper approaching the electric device on the wall, which he has been obsessively attracted to since he entered. It exudes electricity as soon as he gets near as if making him aware that this is another threshold and a passage to another world. Its magnified socket slowly sucks up Cooper and swallows him in order to spit him out again in the Las Vegas suburb through an ordinary wall socket as Dougie Jones.

Veiling Fragments

Lynch makes persistent use of superimpositions , not least in *Inland Empire* and *Twin Peaks: The Return* but also in the two music works, *Industrial Symphony No. 1* and *Duran Duran Unstaged* . Transparent layers of images create a form of veiling, in which objects are at once concealed and disclosed. They merge fragments of different spaces, but

in doing so they create a distinctive translucent and indefinite space of their own. The layers in superimpositions may be of different scale. This is the case, for example, in the scene in Episode 17 of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, which takes place in the Twin Peaks police station. After Freddie has destroyed Bob with his green-gloved fist and Bad Cooper has been annihilated as Cooper puts the green ring on his finger, a large close-up of Cooper's watchful motionless face is superimposed on most of the next part of the sequence. The superimposition thus creates a different dreamlike space, which stands out from the rest of the sequence in the police station as a distinctive fragment. The large close-up emerges when Cooper discovers Naido in the room. It vanishes briefly when he kisses the reappearing, presumably real, Diane and only disappears completely when Cooper leaves with Cole and Diane after having said in a serious tone to the people assembled at the station that "I hope I see all of you again. Everyone of you". A large close-up is fully visible a couple of times, like when he utters with a dark hollow voice the words "We live inside a dream". The veiling dislocates time, emphasized by a shot of the clock on the wall in the police station which seems to struggle to get past the fatal time 2.53. This point in time was, as written above, a notice of a passing from one world to another in the fragment of the floating cube. The veiling of the image with Cooper's close-up may likewise suggest that Cooper is in two different spaces at one and the same time. The police station is a real place but also a passage and Cooper may be aware of this, which is why he says goodbye so formally to his (and Dougie's) friends gathered at the station.

Another quite different example of the construction of a fragment through superimposed images comes from the end of *Inland Empire* , after Susan/Nikki[26] has killed the Phantom, doors have been opened and the Lost Girl has been united with her husband and son.[27] The entire 'liberation sequence' opens with a close-up of a harsh light seemingly from a (theatre?) spotlight. Simultaneously, the sad love song "Polish Poem", which was also used in the first scene with the Lost Girl, sung by Chrysta Bell, written by Lynch and Bell, begins, somewhat in contrast to at least the first part of the sequence in which a family is reunited. By the end of the reunion shots, there is another close-up of the white spotlight, upon which the fragment follows: Susan/Nikki is

seen standing in the mysterious room number 47 in a medium close-up. Her face is illuminated, and she is looking at something, maybe on a TV screen and maybe the light shining on her face comes from this screen. We hear applause simultaneously with Chrysta Bell's singing and the vague contours of a moving figure are superimposed upon Susan/Nikki's face, to which the camera slowly moves closer at the same time as vague string music sounds on top of Bell's singing. The moving figure slowly becomes less vague and can finally be identified as a dancer in a red dress. Then the fragment ends almost as it started, with the harsh spotlight, however a bit more at a distance and we hear loud applause again.

This short fragment is composed of singing, off-screen sound (enthusiastic applause) and a close-up of Susan/Nikki's face superimposed with a dancing ballerina. The fragment is demarcated with shots of a harsh stage light, which has no immediate meaning. The fragment hardly has any spatial confines. As Mary Ann Doane puts it in her article about the close-up, "the face or the object filmed covers the screen, using up, exhausting all space" (2003: 107). The veiling of the close-up of Susan/Nikki's face may be a reflection of what her eyes follow, a dancer on a screen—which accords well with the importance of screens in the film (cf. Chap. 5). The reflection thereby creates a sense of physical space. The veiling of Susan/Nikki's face also creates an affective space, and the sound of applause might be understood as Nikki Grace's fantasy of upcoming applause after the premiere of her film.[28] So does the sad but also serene song, the sound and words of which envelop Susan/Nikki with lines like "On the other side I see shining waves glowing […] now I'll have to live, to forget my world is ending. I'll have to live, I hear my heart beat, fluttering in pain, missing something".

In this fragment too, the veiling composes a transit space. The fragment places Susan/Nikki on an emotional threshold, and may be a passage into a new and serene Nikki Grace while the song asks the existential question? "What will make me want to live/what will make me want to love?"[29] The fragment thus constitutes a fragile space between spaces and a fragile subjectivity, sad and hopeful at one and the same time.

The ballet dancer in her red dress and black kohled eyes has not appeared before in the film. Her shadowy appearance is a fragment from the DVD's collection of bonus material, an approximately 12-minutes-long film called *Ballerina* (2007), which shows a female ballet dancer in a red dress with a black belt and heavy black eye make-up dancing in a circle of light. *Ballerina* consists almost entirely of superimpositions: sometimes the dancer is focused, sometimes unfocused and on the verge of disappearing in a coloured abstraction. Now and then she disappears completely and then materializes again in blue-greyish fog, waves and clouds, which surround the circle of light and make it seem at times to float on air—just like the dancer herself.

Susan/Nikki is wrapped in the intensity emanating from Chrysta Bell's voice and the lyrics of "Polish Poem", which isolates a particularly affective space. As in the earlier example, veiling creates a sense of a fluid threshold space between spaces and times. Susan/Nikki is at once there and elsewhere in time and space. Moreover, the intensity attached to veiling in this example comes from the inclusion of another work of veiling, the *Ballerina* short.[30] In this way, *Inland Empire* opens to another space. It includes another text and thereby disputes *Inland Empire* as a closed, demarcated filmic work.

Spectacle Fragments

Finally, I come to the fragments that are staged spectacles. They occur throughout Lynch's films and TV series and may take place in a real theatre space or a place turned into a theatrical space for the occasion. They are fragments in the sense that, as Martin (2014) has observed, they exist independently of their surroundings. However, they emit a concentrated intensity within the framework of a space in which the singing, the lighting, the sound and the bodily movements altogether form a delimited environment.

Examples of this kind of fragment are manifold, going back to the "Woman in the Radiator" in *Eraserhead* who came out of the dark and sang "In heaven everything is fine". Later on, Lynch ended a couple of works with someone singing: Sailor turns a traffic jam into a stage space for singing "Love Me Tender" to Lula on the top of a car's bonnet at the end of *Wild at Heart*—while the credits start rolling. The same

goes for the weird credit sequence in *Inland Empire* , which takes place in Nikki Grace's mansion and includes a monkey and a man in a lumber jacket sawing on a log. While credits roll, music starts, and the group of women who played prostitutes earlier in the film enter and start to dance in as unmotivated a manner as they did earlier in the film in the "Locomotion" fragment.

One of the women approaches the camera and starts lip-synching to Nina Simone's "Sinnerman", as if singing to an audience outside the frame and turning the salon into a stage. Because the credits tell us who is singing almost simultaneously, it comes as no surprise that the song is not emanating from the woman's body. Neither are her lips behind the rolling credits completely synchronous with Simone's singing—in contrast to the two most famous singing fragments in Lynch's films, which both rupture intensity by suddenly separating the voice from the body: in the Club Silencio fragment Rebekah del Rio performs a lip-synched version of her own singing of Roy Orbison's "Crying" in Spanish for an audition in front of David Lynch (according to Mactaggart 2014)—in an elegant enfolding of an extra diegetic level into the text. In *Blue Velvet* Ben lip-synchs to Orbison's "In Dreams".

In Club Silencio the camera captures del Rio in close-ups. We are therefore made to believe in the physicality and authenticity of her singing. Thus, it is a shocking experience to see del Rio collapse, while her voice continues, uncannily separated from her body. Exactly the same happens in *Blue Velvet* in Ben's place, as Ben stands on his curtained self-made stage, his white-painted and red-lipped face illuminated by the light coming from the lamp he holds as a microphone. When Ben sees Frank so affectively immersed in the song that he seems to be on the verge of exploding, he interrupts his "singing" and lowers the "microphone". Orbison's voice continues until Frank stops the tape recorder, which is simultaneously revealed in the frame. In both scenes the singer's voice is suddenly floating freely in space, lifted from the body to which it appeared to belong—like an audio-visual rendition of the painting *My Head is Disconnected* .

Although the announcer in the Club Silencio makes his audience aware that the theatrical space is a space of illusions, a strong uncanny moment arises when we suddenly realize this 'fraud' or 'fake'. What seems to me so interesting with these two examples is what happens

when the voice all of a sudden loses its "live" authenticity and acquires a ghostly mechanical appearance. Being detached from its "interiority", disembodied and attached to a mechanical recording device, deprives the singing voice of its power of authenticity. It becomes a disturbance, "an alien entity, free-floating and replayable", as Tom Gunning has called the recorded voice in another context (Gunning 2019: 325). The detachment of the singing voice from the body—which is no problem when the voice is from the very beginning disembodied, recorded—punctures the affective atmosphere that constitutes the fragment. It dissociates time and space —the singing voice is actually somewhere else in some other time.

Another singing fragment deals with punctured authenticity as well, although it does not create the same uncanny feeling. Among the closing fragments in *Twin Peaks: The Return* in which different American bands and artists play live (for example, Julee Cruise, Pearl Jam lead Eddie Vedder, Rebekah del Rio, Nine Inch Nails, The Cactus Blossoms and Chromatics),[31] the fictive character James Hurley is invited to perform on the stage too. Together with a backing group of two women, he performs the sentimental, simple love song "Just You" (in Episode 13), just like he did in *Twin Peaks*, Episode 9, in which he also sang it accompanying himself on guitar, but with Donna and Laura's cousin Maddie as backing group. However, James is not just singing again the song he sang more than 25 years ago. This is the exact same version we heard in *Twin Peaks*, literally a repetition. Accordingly, the performance is technically speaking not live but a playback just like in the Club Silencio fragment. But James finishes his song in contrast to Rebekah del Rio. Therefore, the performance may not be experienced as a playback by the audience in the Roadhouse, nor by those audiences of the TV series, who do not remember the James/Maddy/Donna singing sequence.[32] The audience in the Roadhouse accepts the sentimental youthful song and James greets their applause with a rare smile. Yet, the fragment's odd repetition may speak about a temporal standstill for James, of being stuck in *Twin Peaks*, of having lost his "rebel without a cause" motorcycle both literally and metaphorically, like some of the other young people from *Twin Peaks*, who have stayed on in *Twin Peaks* (Audrey, Bobby, Shelly). James said to Donna in Episode 14 of *Twin Peaks* that "everybody's hurt inside". This may be

James's destiny. The repetition of the same indicates that James is captured in a traumatic loop structure, which has to do with Laura whom he loved but whose dark depths and profound struggles the romantic young man far from understood.

The final fragment I go into in this chapter also involves repetition and a question of time—"Audrey's dance " in *Twin Peaks: The Return*. But here we find another kind of repetition. The Roadhouse floor turns into a stage for Audrey to dance (in Episode 16) just like the Double R diner did in *Twin Peaks*, Episode 2. In the *Twin Peaks* scene, Audrey goes into the Double R diner, which she obviously seldom visits ("What is she doing down here?" says doc Hayward to his wife and daughter Donna, apparently the only guests in the diner). Audrey chooses some slow Badalamenti jazz on the jukebox and sits down by the counter. Donna comes to sit by her side, and after Audrey has asked the dangerous question to Donna as to whether Laura had ever talked about her father, she focuses on the music. "Isn't it just dreamy," she says and goes to the floor where she starts to dance in a self-absorbed manner to the jazz tune, which becomes louder and the saxophones more distinct. The scene closes abruptly with a black screen.

In *Twin Peaks: The Return* the extremely discontented Audrey who has changed significantly since the two first seasons, finally arrives at the Roadhouse on her husband's arm (at the end of Episode 16), while Edward Louis Severson (the name by which Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam is announced) performs "Out of Sand", which is a song about time having gone and about being who you are. Audrey and Charlie look like a middle-aged sedate married couple. Three earlier fragments (in Episodes 12,13 and 15), which all take place immediately before they finally go to the Roadhouse, have shown that this is not at all a happy marriage. The couple's rooms appear small and claustrophobic, more suffocating than cosy. The walls in Charlie's office are tree brown in colour and it has stacks of old books and piles of papers everywhere. The curtains in the sitting room are half-drawn and the furniture is dark, heavy and old-fashioned, like the landline telephone (as elsewhere in *Twin Peaks: The Return*) and the large radio and record player furniture. Likewise, Audrey seems unfashionable and unsophisticated in terms of her haircut with the short fringe, her dress and overcoat.

Charlie is no Gary Grant, to put it mildly. Neither is Audrey the Elizabeth Taylor-like seductive, tough and bright (Grossman and Scheibel 2020) woman she was 25 years ago. Audrey comes across as an angry and dissatisfied loud-mouthed wife, who seems repeatedly to accuse her husband of complaining—"You can't stop for one fucking moment"—while it seems to be mostly her who is complaining. Audrey is extremely insecure and confesses unhappily to Charlie that she sometimes feels beside herself, "like I'm somewhere else" and "like I'm somebody else" (Episode 13). Charlie denies knowing that feeling. He replies: "I always feel like myself, and it may not always be the best feeling." So, when they enter the Roadhouse, Eddie Vedder's song echoes their prior conversation: "But now it's gone, gone/And I am who I am/Who I was I will never be again/Running out of sand." Shortly after their arrival, the Master of Ceremonies announces "Audrey's Dance". The audience moves dreamily, like a wave towards the walls to give space on the floor, and the diegetic sound of the room disappears in favour of some indistinct noise. The fragment starts with the start of the music, like it started in the Double R. Audrey closes her eyes and walks to the floor where she starts moving just as self-absorbedly and bodily balanced as she did in the diner. Medium close-ups show her smiling happily with closed eyes and medium long shots show her moving her body and arms elegantly. She is completely in tune with the music and her body has gained a different grace and rhythm, just like her low-cut blouse and pleated black skirt are more becoming than in the preceding episodes. However, her dance is ended abruptly by the return of diegetic sound from the room provoked by an aggressive intruder. Audrey wakes up. She runs to Charlie, and in an ultra-close-up she asks him desperately to "get me out of here". After this close-up there is a cut to another short close-up of Audrey. She is looking bewildered at herself in a round mirror placed on a white background; her face is bare, and she is wearing a white shirt. Then the image turns black and returns after a couple of seconds to the band, which is still playing the Badalamenti tune.

Much has been written about the scenes with Audrey and the final shot of her in the mirror on the white background (see, for example, Grossman and Scheibel 2020). Where is she and what is this, one could ask, just like Cooper asked in the vaulted room in the cube. *Vulture*'s

Devon Ivie (2017b) suggests that the fragment is a dream from which she wakes in the final white shot. Ivie also summarizes the four possible answers to what happened to Audrey (as suggested by the online discussions): (1) she is still in a coma after the explosion in the Twin Peaks bank vault; (2) she is in a psychiatric facility as a consequence of her being raped by Bad Cooper when she was in a coma after the explosion; (3) she is trapped in another lodge—the evidence of this being that the music in Roadhouse is played backwards at the end of the episode (!); or finally, (4) Audrey is a tulpa, just like Diane and Dougie.

Solution two to this strange but also emotionally moving fragment is supported by one of the series paratexts, Mark Frost's *Twin Peaks: The Final Dossier* , which came out in October 2017, after *Twin Peaks: The Return* had finished airing on Showtime. It contained a collection of reports, written by FBI Agent Tamara Preston to Gordon Cole, among others about Audrey Horne. The report was mostly based on rumours, one of these being that Audrey was pregnant when she left the hospital after coming out of her coma, resulting in a child (the evil Richard), that she had married her accountant, that she had disappeared and was maybe later retained in a psychiatric facility. The enveloping of the fragment in music and the absence of all diegetic sound except for the band's playing indicates that the dance is a dream, but what about the other fragments with Charlie? Are they all nightmarish memories from before Audrey—according to Preston's rumours—disappeared? As Hawkes (2019)[33] rightfully observes, "Audrey's Dance " is a title given to the *Twin Peaks* fragment in writing about the series. Making the announcer use this title points at the repetitive structure into which James is also embedded but also to the blurring of boundaries between text and paratexts. However, in the case of Audrey, repetition is seemingly more compulsory. Moreover, we shouldn't forget that it was in the Roadhouse that the Giant announced to the paralysed group consisting of Cooper, the Log Lady and Harry Truman that "it is happening again. It is happening again". There is something slightly uncanny about the repetition of James's song, whereas "Audrey's Dance" is not a repetition in the same way. It may be announced like this, and when Audrey smiles, immersed in her dancing, her smile may

be a smile of remembrance, but it may also express a feeling of freedom and control (see also Grossman and Scheibel 2020).

From the point of view of fragment analysis, the uncertainty of Audrey's biography is of less importance than seeing the dance as a short performance of elegant and liberated body movements by a middle-aged female actress. On the level of narrative, the fragment may be a dream. Yet, I prefer to see the fragment as a tribute to the aged Laura—and the aged Sherilyn Fenn—across a period of 25 years. The other three fragments in this cycle of four show a coarse and complaining Audrey. When she—maybe—wakes up from her dream in the white (institutional?) environment, her frightened face could simply be a reaction to her request to Charlie to "take me out of here". Instead of understanding her fear as the fear of realizing where she is (in an institution), her reaction when looking at herself in a mirror somewhere (without make-up but her face and her hair much more contemporary) could be seen as a reaction to her realization that she has voluntarily—like an insecure, frustrated and aggressive wife—asked to return to the claustrophobic setting that is her dwelling. In the context of the TV series (without for example taking *Twin Peaks: The Final Dossier* into consideration) this suggestion makes sense. At least to me who would want to see traces of the cool Audrey 25 years later.

Taking the idea of the fragment as the overall analytical approach to Lynch's narratives tones down the approach to a Lynch text as a large puzzle in which any single piece is only given meaning when put in its one right place. Solving a puzzle may be satisfying (for example the *Mulholland Drive* narrative). But it may also cause unnecessary frustration. Thinking about Lynch's works as fragments, on the other hand, makes one enter into labyrinths that can lead anywhere, in which the totality is lost from view and in which one can get lost. The fragmented structure creates worlds and affective atmospheres. It also takes viewers on a frightening journey across still new threshold spaces (Fisher 2016) into worlds that hardly make up a coherent story and definitely not a unified space, not to mention a comforting sense of closure.

I explore aspects of the frightening in the next chapter about the uncanny and the sublime in Lynch's audio-visual imagery.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_7

7. David Lynch and Fear: The Uncanny and the Sublime

Anne Jerslev[1]
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anne Jerslev
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

If there's 100 people in the audience, you're going to get 100 different interpretations, especially when things get abstract. It's beautiful. Everybody's a detective and whatever they come up with is valid in my mind.
—David Lynch in Scharf (2019)

The Uncanny—in Freud and in Lynch

Uncertainty and a disturbing lack of temporal, spatial and narrative orientation are everywhere in Lynch's films and TV series. The vertiginous sentence "We live inside a dream", which is repeated on several occasions in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, provides a perfect illustration of the folding of time and space and of inner and outer, of the narrative loops and of dreams within dreams in Lynch's audio-visual work, which often makes the replacement of uncertainty with certainty impossible. The first part of this chapter is about this uncertainty and how it creates feelings of fear.

In the 14th episode of *Twin Peaks* Laura's cousin Maddy is murdered. Even though it may come as no big surprise, it is revealed that Leland Palmer is inhabited by Bob and is going to attack Maddy.

The scene in the haunted Palmer house follows the scene in the Roadhouse where the Giant from the stage has addressed Cooper (bathed in white light like the Giant while the rest of the bar lies in dark) and delivered his message about repetition by repeating himself: "It is happening again. It is happening again." The Giant replaces Julee Cruise and, while delivering his piece of information about something taking place right now, his formulation makes Cooper aware that there is nothing he can do. As diegetic sound disappears, and everyone in the Roadhouse momentarily freezes, the dreamlike scene can be seen as an example of Cooper's extraordinary psychic ability to gain knowledge. But the Giant's formulation given in the present participle also points at the fact that Cooper often knows too little and too late.

The sequence in the Palmer house that ends with the violent murder of Laura's cousin Maddy is divided into three parts, although they take place consecutively. The first two parts start with a shot of trees in the dark, and in both parts the ensuing shot is of a needle rotating on the inner part of a gramophone record in the Palmer's sitting room accompanied by the disturbing *noise of endless repetition*. The nerve-wracking noise is disturbing because of the meaningless repetition of the same mechanical movement, and it is disturbing because nobody comes and takes off the record. The noise points at a strange absence that was already indicated by the first shots of a deserted sitting room, a deserted chair and a low uneasy camera tracking across the sitting room carpet, as if embodied by an invisible ghostly appearance. Indeed, the sitting-room, the centre of cosiness, has been made strange and unfamiliar from the very first shot. The initial shots create an atmosphere of a haunted space, which it is, and impending catastrophe, which will come. The strange shots speak of a home that is not homely, of the impossibility of being at home—which is emphasized by Sarah's moaning as she crawls down the stairs. Her moaning and the sound of the rotating gramophone are the only loud sounds in these last seconds of the first part of the sequence, apart from Sarah's call out for Leland. Leland is not far away but does not react to her call, which begs the question as to whether Sarah's cry of "Leland" is a cry for him to help her or a revelation of who put her in the situation of not being able to walk down the stairs by herself.

Three minutes later (interspersed with a scene in the police station where Margaret Lanterman tells Cooper that "we don't know what will happen and when" and a scene in the Martell home), we are back where we left Sarah—as if time had stood still in the meantime. She crawls slowly forward on the carpet in the living room and passes out after she has seen a white horse materialize. From a close-up of the passed-out Sarah, the camera moves to the record player, still repeating its rotation, and further on to a medium shot of Leland looking at his face in the mirror while knotting his tie. After a medium close-up of the unconscious Sarah, the scene switches to the Roadhouse where Julee Cruise performs and where Cooper is given the information by the Giant that something is happening again.

The third part of the sequence starts with a dissolve from the Giant to the gramophone and a repetition of the shot of Palmer in front of the mirror, still knotting his tie as he did in the previous part of the sequence. After this, in the middle of this part crammed with an atmosphere of anticipation of something bad going to happen, there follows a classical montage showing a person looking at himself in a mirror. This short montage creates certainty as to the frightening "it", which the Giant is referring to. Moreover, it also creates a strange feeling of what Freud (1988 [1919]) called *das Unheimliche* or, in English, *the uncanny*, and which he defined as that which "is related to what is frightening—to what arouses dread and horror" (Freud 1988 [1919]: 339).

In the first shot we see Palmer from behind and his mirror image facing the camera. The next shot is a frontal close-up, which, it is of course implied, shows Palmer looking at himself in the mirror. The third shot is most often similar to the first, only the camera may have been moved a bit back or to one side. However, in this montage we do not watch Palmer looking at himself in the mirror in the third shot. Or rather, we do, but it is Bob's face we see in the mirror (for a description of the scene see also Mactaggart 2010: 132). The mirror montage continues to show the frightening merging of Bob and Leland, which becomes even more frightening as it is hard to see who is mimicking who. Bob seems to have found a perfect host and Leland encounters his suppressed double. The last part of the sequence ends with Leland's violent murder of Maddy.

Even though we do not know why we shall watch Leland knot his tie, we are quite familiar with the conventions of classical film language's editing patterns and able to cognitively anticipate a mirror montage (see, for example, Bordwell and Thompson 2013 [1979]). Therefore, the very moment in which Bob is disclosed in the mirror instead of what we expected to see—Leland—is an instance of *the familiar* suddenly *turning unfamiliar*. This instance, in which the expected routine editing pattern is suddenly disrupted, is a precise illustration of Freud's idea of "the revelation of something unhomely at the heart of hearth and home" (Royle 2003: 1), which activates affective reactions in the form of a sense of shock and emotions such as fear and dread. The reason why I described the beginning of the sequence in such detail is to show that an atmosphere of "something unhomely" is being established from the very beginning. At the same time as it predicts a troubling incident—or worse—it sets the mode and the context in which the mirror scene will be experienced. The close description up till now is also meant to illustrate how analyses of the uncanny require a close attention to style.

This revealing mirror scene is repeated at the end of the series. In the famous final scene of uncanny and shocking doubling, Cooper—who has returned from the Black Lodge—goes to the bathroom and looks at himself in the mirror. First, there is one more example of repetition: we see him say twice to Truman and Doc Hayward that he needs to brush his teeth. In the bathroom, the first shot is similar to the first shot of Leland looking at himself in the mirror. Cooper glances briefly at his mirror image but then he squeezes the toothpaste out of the tube and down into the sink. The next shot is a frontal shot that shows Cooper looking down into the sink while apparently still destroying the tube of toothpaste. Then he looks up and pulls back in order seemingly to be able to throw his head forcefully into the mirror. The third shot finalizes this movement. Cooper breaks the mirror with his forehead, but the mirror image shows Bob. Just like in the Leland-Bob mirror scene , they both turn their heads to the left—Bob with a bleeding wound on his forehead just like Cooper. The camera moves towards Cooper possessed by Bob who, with uncanny laughter, mockingly repeats over and over again the question he asked Truman

and Hayward a short minute before about the well-being of his beloved Annie.

While the Leland-Bob scene had prepared the viewer slightly for the shock by creating an atmosphere of uneasiness, the revelation in the second season's final minute creates an intense feeling of uncanniness. The series ends with this uncanny moment. It provides no relief, no certainty—which is what Ernst Jentsch, whom I will return to shortly, suggests is the condition for feelings of uncanniness to disappear.

Freud refers in *The Uncanny* to his colleague Otto Rank's work on the double in *Double* (1971 [1914], original title *Der Doppelgänger*), not surprisingly as the double in the comprehensive literature about this figure often acts in a disorderly manner, as if embodying the repressed struggling to return. In his thorough study, Rank finds the shadow and the mirror image to be prominent examples of the double. Like the shadow often takes on an existence of its own, the mirror image can be experienced as frightening, because it shows what the person looking into it does not wish to see. Therefore, Rank goes through examples of people trying to smash the mirror—and the mirror image. Through his extensive study of folklore traditions, he mentions, among a range of examples of the mirror revealing a frightening self, that the mirror image is seen as not only revealing "concealed matters" (Rank (1971 [1914]: 64) but also magically predicting future matters. Therefore, the mirror image is also connected with death and most folkloristic texts warn against looking at one's reflection in a mirror.

Without doubt, the mirror has a prominent place in *Twin Peaks* and the mirror shot's doubling mark "moments of rupture" (Elsaesser and Hagener 2015: 86). The *Twin Peaks* pilot's very first image of a person is a frontal close-up of Josie's mirror image showing Josie looking self-absorbedly at her perfectly made-up face. Josie's making up of her face may hint at surface and hiding beneath the surface—as will turn out to be the case. Josie is not the one she appears to be. The revelation of the double in both the Leland-Bob and Cooper-Bob examples is extremely frightening. But unlike most of Rank's examples of split subjectivities, doubles who take on a life of their own and act as dangerous opponents, Bob's appearance is not frightening to the two characters. On the contrary, Palmer and Cooper seem in a strange way to be completed—the mirror image in both scenes acts completely in unison

with its double. Therefore, when Cooper smashes the mirror, his act is not an attempt to destroy the mirror image. Rather, it can be seen as a pleasurable act of violence and brotherhood—enacted by Bob and Cooper turning into Bad Cooper, also known in *Twin Peaks: The Return* as Mr C.[1]

The ghostly atmosphere of emptiness in the Palmer house and Sarah's half-unconscious crawling down the stairs have augured ill, but the merging of Bob and Leland Palmer still creates a sense of shock. However, it also creates *certainty*. Afterwards, shock is replaced by horror and dread during the violent rest of the sequence, which mostly consists of out-of-focus close-ups of Bob, who wanders in and out of Leland, of the terrified Maddy desperately shouting for help and the terrifying sound of repetition from the gramophone mingling with a sound as if of aggressive predators.

The Palmer house is an almost pedagogical illustration of the introductory explanation of *das Unheimliche* in Freud's text, in which he unravels the ambiguous meaning inherent in the word *heimlich*: its sliding from the familiar, well known and homely to what is private and from there to what is concealed and kept from sight. Thus, Freud summarizes that the meaning of *heimlich* is both what is well known and what is concealed. This etymological sliding implies that *heimlich* may very well coincide with its apparent opposite, *das Unheimliche*. *Das Unheimliche* is not only distinctly different from *heimlich* understood as the familiar and homely but also from *heimlich* understood as what is concealed. Hence, paradoxically, *das Unheimliche* is what is rendered visible. Freud thus points out, by borrowing a quote from Schelling, that "*'Unheimlich' is the name for everything that ought to have remained … secret and hidden but has come to light*" (Freud 1988 [1919]: 345—italics in original).[2]

In his landmark article, Freud intends to systematize different ways that sensations of the uncanny may arise. Yet, at the same time he is also careful to bring out particular examples as reasons why the arousal of this feeling may be individual. His point of departure is extremely polemical, though, as he makes an effort to criticize his colleague Ernst Jentsch, who in 1906 had already published an article titled "On the Psychology of the Uncanny" (in German "Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen"). Jentsch argues that "a lack of orientation" (2008

[1906]: 216) or “a particular feeling of uncertainty” (ibid.: 218)—what others from Freud onwards have translated as “intellectual uncertainty” (Freud 1919; Kofman 1991 [1974]; Royle 2003; Hertz 1979; Mulvey 2006; Ravetto-Biagioli 2019)—entails an “impression of the uncanniness of a thing or incident” (ibid.: 217). Jentsch is even more careful than Freud and argues that “the same impression does not necessarily exert an uncanny effect on everybody”; however, he brings to light “doubt as to whether an apparently living being really is animate and, conversely, doubt as to whether a lifeless object may not in fact be animate” (ibid.: 221)—Jentsch’s examples are wax figures, panopticons and panoramas. When certainty is achieved, the feeling of uncanniness (or terror, as Jentsch calls it) disappears.

Freud insists early in *The Uncanny* that “it is not difficult to see that this definition is incomplete” (Freud 1988 [1919]: 341). The article presents two reasons for this critique of Jentsch. One is Freud’s psychoanalytical epistemology, which would deny that when doubt has been overcome, there is no more *Unheimliche*. Freud, on his part, argues that *das Unheimliche* has to do with a compulsion to repeat related to repression (the castration complex). Consequently, the article’s core point is as follows: “[T]his uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something that is familiar and old—established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression” (ibid.: 363–364). In Freud’s understanding, uncanniness is the reaction to universal psychic and cultural processes and can therefore never be fully overcome.

The second reason for his critique of Jentsch is that, following his argument about repression of early childhood complexes and the return of the repressed, he sees several other explanations of the uncanny besides the ambiguous relationship between inanimate and animate. The motif of the double is another example: two persons looking alike or the blending of two persons. Additional examples are the eternal return of the same, which can be experienced in dreams, and magic hubris, for example wishing someone dead and afterwards being told that this actually happened. Freud concludes: “[A]nimism, magic and sorcery, the omnipotence of thoughts, man’s attitude to death, involuntary repetition and the castration complex comprise

practically all the factors that turn something frightening into something uncanny" (ibid.: 365).

Interestingly, Freud does not mention the blurring of boundaries between reality and dream in his summary, which he emphasizes elsewhere in the article ("an uncanny effect is often and easily produced when the distinction between imagination and reality is effaced" (ibid.: 367)), maybe because this would accord too much with Jentsch's notion of uncertainty, the lack of orientation as the root of uncanniness. Additionally, what Freud calls "forms of thought that have been surmounted" (ibid.: 374), and to which he often returns, reminds us a lot of Jentsch's understanding of the cognitive elimination of uncertainty.[3]

The blurring of boundaries between dream and reality is one of the most recurrent narrative and aesthetic means of creating feelings of uncanniness in Lynch. An example from *Lost Highway* shows again, as in the two mirror image examples, how the appearance of the uncanny may be provoked by a cut. But it also shows the uncanny as a ubiquitous *sensibility* (Vidler 1993; Collins and Jervis 2008) in Lynch, an all-encompassing atmosphere of instability and insecurity that can by many different aesthetic means create "a crisis of perception" (Weber 1973) and activate feelings of uncanniness. One example of the production of an uncanny effect:

In the first part of *Lost Highway* , Fred and Renee are lying in their bed and Fred says to Renee: "I had a dream last night." There is a cut to Fred sliding around in the house looking for Renee (as I described in Chap. 2), and the viewer probably presumes—being familiar with classical film language—that the images illustrate the dream he is recounting. But then we are back in the bedroom where Fred raises his head from the pillow with a gasp, indicating that the images we have just seen might have illustrated the nightmarish dream itself and not his retelling of it to Renee. The following shot apparently still takes place in Fred and Renee's reality, only time has been turned back a second or two. We see Renee woken up by his gasp (which we have already seen once) and then raising the upper part of her body towards him. This shot is followed by what will apparently be a traditional cross-cutting sequence: first a close-up of Fred looking towards Renee and then an eyeline match shot of what he sees, Renee's dark silhouette.

The third shot shows once more Fred looking towards Renee. However, the following fourth shot is not identical to the second, and this unexpected change—the sudden turning the familiar unfamiliar—creates a shocking, uncanny effect: what is revealed is that the figure lying beside Fred is an unknown person, an ageing male with an androgynous face and long black hair like Renee's (the face being that of the strange Mystery Man Fred has just met). So were we—again—still—in Fred's dream? In the following shot, the appalled Fred turns on the light on his bedside table, and in the sixth and final shot we see Renee framed in the exact same position as the old man before. Thus, we seem to be back (?) in reality. Renee asks: "Fred, are you all right?" However, the first word provides us with another shock as it is spoken in a low-pitched tone as if it came from a man and the dream for a split second mingled with Fred's awake perception. This ultra-short auditive creation of cognitive dissonance between hearing and seeing again abolishes categorical differences. It contributes to the blurring of boundaries between dream and reality but also between female and male, and places the viewer in an uncanny space of "indecidability" (Weber 1973) regarding the categories that usually help us make sense of the world. There is no relief by the end of this scene either. There is no security, no surmounting of the insecurity regarding the ontologically different spaces of dream and reality, just a feeling of not being able to escape a claustrophobic *Unheimliche*.

Freud and The Sandman

Much Lynch literature has referred to the uncanny (back to my own book (Jerslev 1995 [1991])). In this section I wish to go in greater detail than is usually the case in this literature into the scholarly discussion on Freud's article. My intention is not to propagate a psychoanalytical reading of the uncanny in Lynch but in a sense quite the opposite. I want to show how both Jentsch's text and the many discussions on, in particular, Freud's analysis of E.T.A. Hoffmann's text "The Sandman" from 1816 can support analyses of the uncanny, in which the point is *not* to demonstrate the return of the repressed in various complexes. I also want to emphasize that context is important for feelings of the uncanny to arise, whether the uncanny is creating shock or a more

pervasive sense of uneasiness. Therefore, uncertainty does not in itself create uncanniness.

Outside of Lynch studies, Freud's article has been analysed extensively, and his polemical tone towards Jentsch's article has often been mentioned. Thus, it has been argued (see, for example, Royle 2003; Kofman 1991 [1974]; Hertz 1979; Mulvey 2006) that many of Freud's examples could be categorized more along Jentsch's thoughts than as examples of the return of the repressed. Moreover, Freud has been criticized for reading E.T.A Hoffmann's story in a way that only looks into theme (the castration complex) and not the form of the text (the recurrent changes of points of view, the creation of narrative uncertainty). Thereby Freud "overstabilizes" Hoffmann's story, as Neil Hertz points out (1979: 304). Freud fails to see important structures such as the continuous blurring of boundaries between imaginary and real in his effort to supersede Jentsch's argument (Kofman 1991 [1974]). Nicholas Royle thus states in his large work on the uncanny that "Freud's reading of 'The Sandman' is a violent attempt to reduce or eliminate the significance of Jentsch's work on the uncanny" (Royle 2003: 41). Jentsch does not explicitly mention "The Sandman" but he does refer to the way E.T.A. Hoffmann is occupied with the uncertainty of whether a character is a human figure or an automaton.

Freud's lengthy discussion about "The Sandman" starts with a prolonged résumé of Hoffmann's complex and rich story. The critical psychoanalytical readings of Freud's reading of the text all point out that this is Freud's highly personal and somewhat blind résumé of a text about eyes and seeing. Moreover, the scholarly discussions of *The Uncanny* point out that "The Sandman" is very much about intellectual uncertainty, although it is also heavy with doublings of different kinds.

One of the main critical arguments against Freud's reading is that in advancing his point about the castration complex, he completely ignores the female characters in the story and particularly the importance of the doll Olympia (for example, Todd 1986; Royle 2003, Mulvey 2006). Thereby he neglects the role of woman in the development of the castration complex. As Jane Marie Todd bluntly put it in her contribution to feminist criticism of Freud, it was impossible for Freud to see "that his examples in *Das Unheimliche* tell a story about men's fear of women and the social consequences of that fear" (Todd

1986: 528).[4] Another important critical point, as put forward by Neil Hertz (1985), is that Freud himself is so fixated on depth (the unconscious) that he is blind to the fact that what is "unsettling, if not uncanny, about 'The Sandman' is as much a function of its surface as of the depths it conceals" (105). Hertz's point is that it is the analysis of formal, narrative or aesthetic strategies (in audio-visual or literary language) that explains the occurrence of the uncanny, not the content. As Hertz (1985: 101-102) has eloquently phrased it:

> The feeling of the uncanny would seem to be generated by being reminded of the repetition compulsion, not by being reminded of whatever it is that is repeated. The becoming aware of the process is felt as eerie, not the becoming aware of some particular item in the unconscious (see also Mactaggart (2010) for a reference to this quote).

Freud's notion of repetition compulsion is the epistemological foundation for understanding the uncanny as the emergence of a feeling of at once pleasurable and unpleasant uneasiness or horror. However, Hertz's point is that the important point to take into consideration when Freud's text is used in textual analysis is *repetition as narrative and stylistic principle* and *how* this can be produced by audio-visual (or literary) means—more than the *what*, the narrative unfolding of, for example, the castration complex. Nicholas Royle offers a similar point in his analysis of "The Sandman", claiming that the uncanny is not a theme but "a ghostly feeling that arises (or doesn't arise), an experience that comes about (or doesn't), as an effect of reading" (Royle 2003: 44)—I assume that Royle uses the term "reading" in a broad sense—as his book also includes, for example, an essay on film and the uncanny.

Royle mentions many of the examples Freud (and Jentsch) mentions, the blurring of boundaries between living and dead/sane and insane/mechanical and lifelike, the feeling of déjà vu, the figure of the double. He also mentions "silence, solitude and darkness" (Royle 2003: 2) and feelings of beauty so immense that they become frightening (an uncanniness bordering on the sublime to which I will return later in this chapter).

Royle adds that the uncanny has to do with the blurring of boundaries: "[a] strangeness of framing and borders, an experience of liminality" (2003: 2). Basically, uncanniness arises when "any straightforward sense of what is inside and what is outside" is disturbed (ibid.). Royle's quite broad enumeration of what creates a feeling of uncanniness suggests, too, that an analytical endeavour may be to argue how a text grapples with one or more of the complexes that create uncanniness. Royle himself argues, for example, that "The Sandman" is a story about "the uncanniness of seeing and not seeing" (ibid.: 45).

Along the line of both Freud and Jentsch he emphasizes that a feeling of uncanniness may be individual and felt as individual but adds that it always has to do with a relation to the world. Uncanniness "may thus be construed as a foreign body within oneself, even the experience of oneself *as* a foreign body […] indissociably bound up with a sense of repetition or 'coming back'" (ibid.). This account of the uncanny takes us back to Audrey and her estrangement from herself, which I referred to in the previous chapter. Audrey concludes her desperate conversation with Charlie by claiming: "I'm not sure who I am but I am not me." As if she was her own double.

As I see it, both Royle's and Hertz's points make possible textual readings of the uncanny that are not per se psychoanalytical. They support close readings like the one I offered at the beginning of this chapter, in which I demonstrated how the uncanny in the Palmer house was produced stylistically and by way of editing.

In Episode 14 of *Twin Peaks*, this building up of an atmosphere over three parts creates a strange feeling of standstill, as if time was holding its breath. It culminates shockingly in the mirror scene, which offers momentary *certainty* by showing the doubling of Leland with Bob. However, certainty is a fleeting sensation in David Lynch's work, and feelings of the uncanny by way of making the familiar unfamiliar may resurface at any moment. In Lynch's work, *heimlich* and *unheimlich* are tied to each other, or *veiling and unveiling* go hand in hand, to use Kofman's metaphors (1991 [1974]). This intertwining draws attention to the hidden-revealed/seeing-not-seeing complex inherent in the uncanny; one cannot exist without the other or lines are continuously blurred—including between good and bad. There are few characters

without cracks in the surface through which evil may enter—or in other words, few characters do not hide a secret that, when it becomes visible, is accompanied by feelings of the uncanny. This goes for Cooper too.

Bob, the double, left Leland Palmer to die because he was of no use to Bob anymore. This is what Bob recounts through the voice and body of Leland Palmer in the scene in the police station cell (Episode 16) in which Palmer confesses to the murder of Laura and Maddy and subsequently dies. Bob talks through Leland who, with an insane devilish smile on his face, asks Cooper, Albert Rosenfield and Harry S. Truman whether they would like to ask "him" some questions. After having confessed to the murders of Laura and Maddy he looks at his handcuffed arms and exclaims, switching schizophrenically between the first and the third person singular: "Oh Leland Leland, you have been a good vehicle and I've enjoyed the ride. But now he's weak and full of holes." After another remark, Cooper asks him: "Does Leland know what you have done?" Bob/Leland answers: "Leland's a babe in the woods with a large hole where his conscience used to be." Then Leland passes out as if Bob was in the process of leaving him and Cooper and his colleague leave the room.

Bob does not leave Leland's body because Leland is dead—maybe in an effort to break loose from Bob—the only way to break loose from Bob. On the contrary, Leland dies the way Bob has decided, simply because Bob cannot use him anymore. The scrupulous lawyer Leland Palmer was a good vehicle but now he is weak. Leland dies in the cell under the sprinkling water pouring down after being activated by a smoke alarm because Bob has left him. Leland confesses that he was "raped" by Bob at an early age: "He opened me, and I invited him, and he came inside me." In the final scene in Episode 16,
Truman, Rosenfield and Cooper walk along a path in the woods and contemplate the uncanny experience they have just had. They try, each in their own way, to explain the unexplainable. Truman wishes "intellectual certainty" (in Jentsch's sense), and therefore he argues that Leland was insane, that Bob was an inner image and his confession the words of a madman. Cooper doubts, and Rosenfield tries to meet the not understandable by answering that people such as Maddy, Sarah and Laura had actually seen Bob in visions. Major Briggs who has joined

them claims that certainty is not a possibility. Thus Jentsch's claim to certainty would in Major Briggs's thinking be too good to be true. The blurring of boundaries between the rational and the irrational, dream and reality, is a fact of life.

By the end of *Twin Peaks* Bob has invaded Cooper. Leland smashes his head against the concrete wall in the cell just like Cooper smashes his head against the mirror in the last episode. But whereas Leland dies, Cooper lives on as a doubled self in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, the good Cooper imprisoned in the Black Lodge and Bad Cooper driving around and doing his evil deeds. From a Freudian perspective, E.T.A. Hoffmann's story may offer a clue as to how Bob was able to invade Cooper. Freud reads "The Sandman" as a story about an unresolved Oedipal conflict, about the mentally confused Nathanael who ends up committing suicide because he keeps seeing an evil father figure who wishes to steal his eyes, i.e. castrate him. Even though Cooper denied that he had secrets when he arrived in Twin Peaks, there may be a reason why he is also penetrable. Apparently, Cooper had a relationship with his father figure, earlier FBI agent Windom Earle's wife Caroline, and was not able to protect her when needed (she was a crown witness to a crime). So, she was killed (he tells Audrey in Episode 17). Anyway, something happened in Pittsburgh—as suggested by Bob/Leland in the cell when he addresses Cooper about having "this thing for knives" and Cooper slightly withdraws. Apparently, this "father-son" drama revolves around the "son's" crime against the "father" by initiating an "incestuous" relationship with "mother". However, the series also seems to refuse a maybe too easy Freudian interpretation by turning the drama into a performance, by doubling it, so to speak. It is revealed that the violent Windom Earle probably staged the whole Pittsburgh tragedy: he killed his wife and wounded Cooper besides having committed the crime she witnessed and simulated insanity (see also Jerslev 1995 [1991]).

Examples of the uncanny connected with doubles and doubling abound in *Twin Peaks* and in *Twin Peaks: The Return*: the making strange of the world; the ubiquitous disorientation related to time, space and characters. There are different versions of characters (like Diane, for example, besides Cooper/Dougie/Mr C, obviously) and it appears that—in line with the examples in *The Uncanny*—uncertainty

can arise over whether characters are human—or a tulpa. Language is continuously repeating itself—characters repeat their remarks without obvious reasons. Worlds are doubled and interfere with each other—everywhere in the series. Scenes are repeated (like the ageing Cooper dragging the young Laura through the woods in Episodes 17 and 18). The same character may be passing through different times (like Cooper at the end of *Twin Peaks: The Return*), or maybe it is different characters who traverse time and space in uncanny ways. There are no firm boundaries anywhere to secure identity and certainty. Audrey's remark about being someone else epitomizes the series' pervasive creation of a feeling of lack of existential security and an atmosphere of identity confusion. This also goes for Diane in Episode 16 of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, who, after having told Gordon Cole, Albert Rosenfield and Tammy Preston about Cooper raping her (an incident she had forgotten up to that point), confusedly repeats, "I'm in the sheriff's office" and then shouts three times, "I'm not me." Diane feels like she is someone else, and by expressing this feeling she obviously also has a feeling that there is a genuine and coherent Diane somewhere. However, *Twin Peaks: The Return* is reluctant to acknowledge any such coherent subjectivity. This Diane was a tulpa—a manufactured "human" being, which reminds us of the automaton or doll E.T.A. Hoffmann is imagining. When she is catapulted into the Red Room, Mike tells[5] her: "[S]omeone manufactured you." To which the tough woman responds: "I know. Fuck you!" When she turns her head or squeezes her jaws she sounds like an artificial creature, and when her head explodes, the parts falling off the cracking face resemble pieces of thin shell from a porcelain doll.

However, a real, red-haired Diane is released from within Naido with the stitched-together eyes. So Diane was actually in the police station imprisoned in Naido's body, like she said in the meeting with Cole, Rosenfield and Preston. When Cooper sees Diane in the sheriff's station, they kiss passionately, and Diane says somewhat ironically but also with the joy of recognition: "Cooper, the one and only!" She may mean that this is the Cooper that did not rape Diane. However, the whole series has been about there not being a "one and only" Cooper. The overall production of uncanny feelings in *Twin Peaks: The Return* comes from the blurring of boundaries between "originals" and

“copies”, the questioning of subjectivity as essentially unique and coherent.

At the beginning of the final episode of the series, Diane and Cooper meet again—as if they were now in another world and had not met at the police station. After Cooper has passed another liminal space between two worlds (the door that fits the key to room 315 at the Great Northern closing in slow motion behind him) and asked Cole and Diane not to follow him, he ends after another repetition of an attempt to bring the young Laura “home” once more in the Red Room, as if he is forever bound to this space and cannot avoid being transported to it again and again. Mike asks the question that designates the uncanny temporal uncertainty, not least in this final episode: “Is it future or is it past?” Followed by the usual strange and uncanny sound of bodies moving their feet across floors as if they were slightly automated—which points at the Red Room as not only the non-place where time dissolves but also where the distinction between animate and non-animate bodies dissolves—Cooper leaves the Black Lodge once more.[6] As he stands in the woods on the other side of the immensely large red curtain, which just like in Episode 29 of *Twin Peaks* seems to be kept up by a magic force and reach beyond imagination—thereby also conferring upon the Red Room’s uncanniness a sense of the sublime—he meets Diane as if for the first time in 25 years. They look into each other’s eyes and their restrained and touching conversation takes the form of questions and answers as to whether they are the real Cooper and Diane: “Is it you? Is it really you?” “Yes, it is really me, Diane. Is it really you?” “Yes.” However, this certainty and sense of a coherent subjectivity does not last long.

In the following scene, Cooper and Diane sit silently side by side in a car[7] driving along the highway through the desert landscape (Illustration 7.1).

Illustration 7.1 Framegrab of Laura Dern and Kyle MacLachlan from *Twin Peaks*: *The Return*

The landscape is oddly reminiscent of the highway along which Bad Cooper was driving when he entered a strange field of electricity and had a car accident in Episode 3.[8] Cooper may be heading for the same electrifying space—we only get the mysterious remark from a seemingly worried Diane: "Are you sure you wanna do this?"—the epitome of clues as non-clues in Lynch. The field of electricity is reached near some large power pylons as predicted by Cooper. When they slowly drive forwards along the roadside, they enter this space of otherness, which apparently takes them "across", in Cooper's words. Day turns to night, electricity flares up like lightning, the car seems to move without moving, and Cooper and Diane are at once like frozen and torn apart in a succession of quick flashes and superimpositions from different angles. Once through to the other side, it is dark night, just like day turned to night when Cooper left the police station in the second but last episode in order to pass another threshold. The car drives quickly along the dark road—as in *Lost Highway* and *Wild at Heart*.

When Cooper wakes up the next morning in the motel room they rented, Diane has gone. She has left a note in which she calls herself Linda and addresses Cooper as Richard, telling him that she doesn't recognize him anymore. However, this doubling was already anticipated as Diane saw an exact double of herself staring at her from a distance the night before. "Whatever it was we had together, it's over," Diane/Linda's note continues. The story of Diane and Cooper is the story of a love affair that never started. "Whatever it was" ended with a sad and discordant sex scene , which was mostly composed of close-ups of Diane's and Cooper's faces—Cooper looking at once intensely and impassively at her and Diane looking upwards, crying and trying to cover his gaze with her hands. It is as if they are there together and not there at the same time, as if Cooper is already on his way in his unavailing effort to rewrite the history of a murder of a young woman. The scene is accompanied by The Platters' mournful and powerful "My Prayer" from 1956, which is a love song about a dream about staying together forever: "My prayer is to linger with you at the end of the day in a dream that's divine." The beautiful song, which ends by wishing "that you'll always be there at the end of my prayer", adds to the dissonance in the scene. It is a love song, but the sex is uncomfortable and frustrating. So, I see this scene as a sad farewell between two characters who have reunited but have in a sense not, or far too late.[9]

As has often been mentioned by *Lynch* scholars, electricity is an omnipotent force in David Lynch's universe and not least in the three *Twin Peaks* works—*Twin Peaks*, *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* and *Twin Peaks: The Return*. Electricity is a sign of liminality. It is a connecting link between worlds. Electricity can transport people from world to world, and it is associated with evil forces such as the appearance of Bob and the Woodsmen, who are able to bring Bad Cooper back to life by manipulating his body.[10] But electricity is also a power of creation, a force of vitality that is everywhere, as the Log Lady eloquently told Hawk in one of their beautiful telephone conversations in *Twin Peaks: The Return* (Episode 10): "Hawk. Electricity is humming. You hear it in the mountains and rivers. You see it dance among the seas and stars and glowing around the moon. But these days the glow is dying. What will be in the darkness that remains?".

“Home”

At the beginning of Episode 18 of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Dougie returns to his “family”. Having just been manufactured in the Red Room (by means of electricity, a golden orb and a sample of Cooper’s hair), the new Dougie asks with a smile—a facial expression that does not belong to the Red Room—the number one question in *Twin Peaks: The Return,* which is never answered: “Where am I?” Then a frenetic camera movement along the zigzag floor connects between worlds as it stops in front of the red door, which distinguishes Dougie’s house from all the similar houses in the suburb. Before Cooper left Las Vegas in order to go to Twin Peaks, Sonny Jim, Janey-E and Cooper/Dougie embraced in the slot machine hall in the casino. In this ghost-like, irreal/hyperreal and hyper-capitalist environment, which is, according to Baudrillard, the essential inhuman, superficial and “immemorial” space, “where things lose their shadow, where money loses its value, and where the extreme rarity of traces of what signals to us there leads men to seek the instantaneity of wealth” (1999 [1986]: 128),[11] Cooper/Dougie assured his “family” that later on “I will walk through that red door and I’ll be home for good”. When the digital camera has transported the new Dougie to the red door, a shot shows Janey-E opening the door to Dougie. Sonny Jim’s voice is calling “Dad”, the three embrace again and Dougie merely replies “Home” in an almost childish voice.

As I discussed in Chap. 2, David Lynch has extensively staged the space of the home as uncanny in both films and painting; as he said back in 1992: “It’s a place where things can go wrong”. (McKenna 1992: 24). By means of an “aesthetic of estrangement” (Vidler 1992), Lynch creates claustrophobic rooms, fragile architectures that are unable to provide safety, only constrictions, strange spaces without comfort in which one can get lost, permeable environments that do not protect their inhabitants from the outer world (see also Martin 2014, Chap. 3). The home is an uncanny space in Lynch’s works, not only because the *unheimlich* is the *heimlich* understood as the secret, the part of family life that is hidden (obviously this is the case in the Palmer house). It is also for the opposite reason. It is a space in which, notwithstanding the kind of architecture, boundaries between inside and outside are blurred; therefore, it is rarely “intimate, friendly, comfortable” (Freud

1988 [1919]: 342)—just like we see in *The Elephant Man* , in which John Merrick creates a private home for himself in the hospital by imitating the bourgeois homes he has visited but cannot prevent the evil Bytes from intruding and capitalizing on his deformity by turning a home into a public freakshow. And like we see in *Lost Highway* in which the uncanny Mystery Man at a party tells Fred Madison: "I'm in your house now." As Anthony Vidler says in his book about architecture and the uncanny,

> the uncanny has, not unnaturally, found its metaphorical home in architecture: first in the house, haunted or not, that pretends to afford the utmost security while opening itself to the secret intrusion of terror (1992: 11).

However, when Dougie is referring to home, there is no "imperceptible sliding of cosiness into dread" (Vidler 1992: 57). Dougie is invoking a certain sentimental imaginary, which includes a harmonious nuclear family, a father who knows how to drive a fast car, and a feeling of stability and a steady life. Yet, an ironic tone is attributed to this imagery of a happy family reunited—similar to the ironic undertone that adheres to the image of the Beaumont and the Williams families having an idyllic get-together at the end of *Blue Velvet* . The men are in the garden, the women in the house and Jeffrey moves from the garden to the house to look at a robin with a bug in its mouth sitting in the open kitchen window. It is just that it appears mechanical. Just like in *Blue Velvet* , there is an artificially created human in the homecoming scene in *Twin Peaks: The Return*: Dougie is "manufactured". Dougie is, strictly speaking, in the words of Freud and Jentsch, an automaton, fabricated by the magical transformation of hair, a golden orb and electricity. However, one could argue that what creates a feeling of uncanniness on top of the sentimental image of "father returning" is, more than an uncertainty as to which category he belongs to, that it does not really matter. To paraphrase Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli from her discussion about humans and robots in Alex Garland's *Ex Machina* (2014), the uncanny is not an affect produced by the lack of ability to say what is an artificial and what is a human being "but from the fact that it is no longer possible to make such distinctions" (2019: 4).[12] The

new Dougie is not a double made by a computer in a high-technology facility.[13] Nevertheless, the new Dougie possesses the memory—the data—that, when he has been transported to the red door, makes him utter the word "home" as the only word we hear him say. It sounds at once automatic and emotional, a token of the new Dougie as both human and automaton.

Cooper is also obsessed with "home" by the end of *Twin Peaks: The Return*. Apparently, he has the same vision as Dougie of home as a longed-for feeling of homeliness. Cooper may have moved back in time in order to prevent the murder of Laura, as suggested by much writing about the final two parts of the series. However, in vain. In Episode 17, Cooper and Mike visit the wise former BFI agent Phillip Jeffries, who disappeared and then returned in the form of a talking, steaming and clanking kettle-formed device who seems to be able to give enigmatic answers to all questions. Jeffries says, "You can go in now. Cooper, remember," and Mike adds, "e-lec-tri-ci-ty." There then ensues the same lighting of Cooper and Mike, the same use of double exposure and disturbance of the image as occur to Cooper and Diane in the car in Episode 18. Cooper closes his eyes and apparently he has had the opportunity to "go in" at a previous point in time, at least in his imagination—when Laura was still living. Only, Cooper himself is old.

Twin Peaks: The Return reuses images (transformed into black and white) from *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* , e.g. the scene when Laura leaps out of her home and goes to meet James, while an insane-looking Leland lurks behind her window on the first floor. When James stops in the wood, Cooper materializes and (as an older version of the lurking Jeffrey in *Blue Velvet*) watches the frightened Laura and the uncomprehending James. Laura's desperate outpouring is the exact opposite of Audrey's and Diane's: Laura knows who she is (and what has been done to her), but her surroundings do not. "It's just me now," she says heart-rendingly to James, who sees her as he wants to see her.

After Laura has jumped off James's motorcycle, she meets Cooper, who stretches his hand towards her and drags her along through the wood. There is a cut to the dead Laura wrapped in plastic, who disappears simultaneously with Cooper's hand meeting Laura's, as if his effort had the intended effect and Laura had actually not died. She asks

him, bewildered, where they are going, and Cooper finally opens his mouth and answers: “We’re going home.”

The rest of the episode switches uncertainly between different times, as if Cooper’s effort to rewrite the past was enacted through a struggle between opposing powers: the first scene in the first episode of *Twin Peaks* in which Pete Martell goes fishing is rewritten so that he does not find the dead Laura and therefore starts fishing, which I mentioned in Chap. 3. Then there is the scene with the broken alcoholic Sarah Palmer, who tries to destroy Laura’s saccharine prom queen photo (which I also discussed in Chap. 3). Finally, we are back in the woods where Cooper is dragging Laura along. But suddenly she is gone; only the uncanny dreadful scream we have heard so often lingers in the dark.

The final episode of the series starts by repeating (although this time in colour) the images of a silent Cooper dragging a silent Laura through the woods and Laura’s sudden disappearance with a horrible scream. However, the first part of the black-and-white sequence, in which we see Laura slip away from the house and Palmer watching, has been deleted in the repetition. Moreover, what also happens in the first scene of the final episode is an immobilized Bad Cooper burning in a chair in the Red Room, black smoke coming out of his body as if from an inhuman creature, as if he did not really die at the police station and is now dead for real.

As I see it, the scenes I have referred to suggest that Cooper is on the wrong track. It seems utterly mistaken by Cooper to bring Laura “home”, given that her home is a hotbed of violence and molestation. The repetition of the images of Cooper dragging a bewildered Laura with him but without the shot of Palmer lurking around his daughter may be an indication that Cooper does not seem to recall anything. So, Jeffries’ advice—or warning—“Cooper, remember” is not taken. By contrast, Laura remembers everything—and screams. Someone or something (David Lynch and his digital editing equipment!) helps her let go of Cooper’s hand and Cooper seems to remember even less. This also goes for the final visit to what used to be the Palmer residence together with Carrie Page—or the 25-years-older version of Laura Palmer. Cooper’s naïve boy scout project, you could say, of saving Laura from being murdered or bringing her back from the dead and uniting

her with her family is not only absurd, it is doomed from the very beginning. Why Cooper takes such a wrong step might have to do, I suggest, with the fact that Bad Cooper has been eliminated. There is no double to balance Cooper's overenthusiasm. By the end of the series, Cooper is lost—and lost in time. Laura's scream keeps being repeated as a reminder of the (fight against) violence and brutality the *Twin Peaks* cycle is basically about.

The Sublime

The concept of the uncanny is not sufficient to completely explain the ways in which Lynch creates feelings of fear. Neither do the examples I have discussed so far cover all aspects of Lynch's imagery. Therefore, in the last part of this chapter, I discuss examples of sublime imagery in Lynch. I first outline the concept.

It has been argued that the sublime and the uncanny arouse similar feelings of shock, of fear and dread (see, for example, Kelley 2003; Vidler 1992; Ravetto-Biagioli 2019). However, the uncanny and the sublime may as feelings be activated by very different kinds of images. The examples of the uncanny I have taken up in this chapter are alike by creating a sense of claustrophobia. They have shown how, in particular, the home is made unhomely (often by using close-ups, medium close-ups and shocking editing strategies). In the following I return to a couple of the fragments I discussed in the last chapter and then I delve into the famous White Sands atomic bomb explosion fragment in Episode 8 of *Twin Peaks: The Return*.[14] So, I turn to ways in which Lynch creates experiences that border on what is "excessive, unmanageable, even terrifying" (Shaw 2017: 5); one difference between an aesthetics of the uncanny and an aesthetics of the sublime is that sublime imagery is excessive and uses long and ultra-long shots.

I have already used the term "sublime" to describe the feeling aroused by the grand shot of the vast landscape in the "Dance for freedom" fragment in *Wild at Heart* (Illustration 7.2). I talked about "a vision of sublime boundlessness" and about "powerful sublimity" (p. 193).

Illustration 7.2 Framegrab from *Wild at Heart*

I also characterized the scene from the outside of the floating cube in Episode 3 of *Twin Peaks: The Return* as a scene of "sublime spatial limitlessness" (p. 203). To put it briefly and precisely by quoting Immanuel Kant from *Critique of Judgment* (1790): "[T]he sublime *is that in comparison with which everything else is small*" (*Critique of Judgment* XXV (1790), in Adams 1992: 388—italics in original). The sublime is an experience, a sight, which strikes the viewer with its disturbing sense of incomprehensible scale and provokes an extreme, complex feeling of fear and awe: "[T]he sublime defines the moment when thought comes to an end and we encounter that which is 'other'" (Morley 2010). In contrast to the uncanny, the aesthetics of the sublime and the feelings of fear and awe are mostly, when applied to audio-visual media, connected with magnitude, the excessively grand, that which offers staggering images of vastness. The sublime is the marvellous, that which exceeds —aesthetically and emotionally—speech and which creates in the viewer fear as well as pleasure. In a contemporary context, in which the sublime is not connected with transcendence in any religious way,

“wow” could be the reaction to this feeling of lack of words (Morley 2010).

The term has a long theoretical history going back to philosopher and literary critic Dionysius Longinus in the first century A.D. However, since the eighteenth century, it has received continued interest from scholars within philosophy, and the arts in particular. Interest has increased not least within the last few decades, with postmodernist thinking and since American painter Barnett Newman in the late 1940s advocated that contemporary American art, liberated from “nostalgic” (Newman 2010 [1948]) European traditions of the beautiful and the sublime, tried to experiment with new ways of creating the sublime (see also Morley (ed.) 2010; Brady 2013; Shaw 2017). Following Emily Brady (2013), who criticizes postmodern thinking about the sublime (in particular Lyotard) for overemphasizing the metaphysical power in the concept and neglecting the contradictory feelings of pleasure and pain that the classical philosophers pointed at, I focus in the following pages on the sublime as discussed in Longinus, Burke and Kant. Hereby I also agree with Brady that the classical writing on the sublime can shed light on feelings towards the grand in contemporary culture. Finally, I follow Brady in emphasizing that the sublime has to do with “spatiotemporal objects rather than merely [with] the mind” (Brady 2013: 138). The sublime has to do with aesthetics, whether it be the “natural sublime” (Brady) or the mediated sublime, for example the feelings evoked at a distance in the cinema.

The focus in Lynch is not in particular on nature—from where the classical writers took their examples. But I think the concept of the sublime can help us become aware of a way of defamiliarizing the familiar in Lynch’s work and understand the ambiguous feeling of being shaken that many of Lynch’s images provoke. I go into audio-visual examples in Lynch characterized by representing vastness and immensity.[15] I would also like to advance the following quote from Philip Shaw’s (2017) overview of the concept’s history, which shows how the sublime is closely related to the way I have outlined Lynch’s universe in this book: “Our ability to discern boundaries or spatial or temporal limitations is brought into question by the sublime” (Shaw 2017: 100).

Longinus claimed that sublime writing was “marvellous” and “throws an audience into transport”. Moreover, to the rhetorician, “the marvellous always works with more surprising force than that which barely persuades or delights” (Longinus cited from Ashfield and de Bolla 1996: 22). In Longinus, the sublime is understood as a powerful, awe-inspiring textual form that affects the reader or viewer profoundly, to the extent that he or she is shaken to the core. This feeling of thrownness is what Longinus calls *ekstasis* (meaning to be outside oneself). It is, as noted by Shaw (2017: 26), not a religious but an aesthetic feeling.

English eighteenth-century philosopher and politician Edmund Burke uses the word “fear”, but he also talks about pain and terror when explaining the sublime:

> No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear. For fear being an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever therefore is terrible, with regard to sight, is sublime too, whether this cause of terror, be endued with greatness of dimensions or not; for it is impossible to look on any thing as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous (*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1759), in Ashfield and de Bolla 1996: 133).

To Burke, the sublime was a feeling of “astonishment”, which he found in nature:

> The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror [...] Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferior effects are admiration, reverence and respect (*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1759), in Ashfield and de Bolla 1996: 132).

Like Longinus, Burke talks about a feeling of being taken and profoundly shaken face to face with what is not only almost non-

understandable but also fundamentally unrepresentable. Astonishment, in Burke's understanding, is a superior feeling experienced vis-à-vis nature. It is a feeling that overwhelms the viewer to the extent that he or she loses control of him- or herself. Astonishment hypnotizes and surrenders the subject to the dizzying imagination of the unimaginable, the boundless and limitless. This feeling of lack of control of mind and body facing the sublime is what causes horror and pain, or terror as Burke calls it. Terror is a much stronger feeling than delight. However, the sublime's terror also includes pleasure, or delight. But it is a specific delight that is closely related to pain.

Burke notes illuminatingly how the sublime is a powerful feeling of disorder, to which we can surrender with terror and delight:

> The mind is hurried out of itself, by a crowd of great and confused images; which affect because they are crowded and confused. For separate them, and you lose much of the greatness and join them, and you infallibly lose the clearness (*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1759), in Ashfield and de Bolla 1996: 136).

The sublime is what shakes the mind to the degree that "our imagination is finally lost" (Burke in Ashfield and de Bolla 1996: 139) and we may thus henceforth be able to perceive differently. However, Burke also draws attention to the ambivalence that much of the early literature on the sublime has grappled with—which Kant seemed to think through the solution to: the ambivalent position between empowerment and disempowerment confronted with the sublime. Edmund Burke formulates this contradiction in the sublime in the following eloquent way:

> Whenever strength is only useful, and employed for our benefit or our pleasure, then it is never sublime; for nothing can act agreeably to us, that does not act in conformity to our will; but to act agreeably to our will, it must be subject to us; and therefore can never be the cause of a grand and commanding conception (*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the*

> *Sublime and Beautiful* (1759), in Ashfield and de Bolla 1996: 138).

The sublime is a frightening *more*, which cannot be useful in a simple, ordinary way. The sublime is extra-ordinary. It can never be complete subordinated to our will; if it were, it would not be sublime. Therefore, the sublime can never be merely pleasurable. It is an overwhelming and dizzying feeling of being transported, to use Longinus's word, which is at once powerful and subjugating.

Also, to Kant, approximately half a century later, the sublime evokes a complex feeling of pleasure and pain. The sublime is an aesthetic experience related to the infinity and immeasurability of an object. Kant's focus is solely on the imagination and its conflictual relation to reason; what "makes us judge as *sublime* [is] not so much the object as our own state of mind in the estimation of it" (Critique of Judgment XXVI (1790) in Adams 1992: 389—italics in original). In Kant, the sublime is a faculty to think the unthinkable, you might say: "*[T]he sublime is that, the mere ability to think which shows a faculty of the mind surpassing every standard of sense*" (Critique of Judgment XXV (1790), in Adams 1992: 388—italics in original). What prompts the sublime in Kant, just as with the earlier philosophers, is the imagining of the wildness and grandeur of nature. Kant thus writes, in accordance with both Longinus and Burke, that "[t]he mind feels itself *moved* in the representation of the sublime in nature" (Critique of Judgment XXVII (1790), in Adams 1992: 390—italics in original). The kind of nature evoking the sublime is famously described in Kant like this:

> Bold, overhanging and, as it were, threatening rocks; clouds piled up in the sky, moving with lightning flashes and thunder peals; volcanos in all their violence of destruction; hurricanes with their track of devastation; the boundless ocean in a state of tumult; the lofty waterfall of a mighty river, and such like (Critique of Judgment XXVIII (1790), in Adams, ibid.).

Obviously, what is emphasized is magnitude. It provokes what Kant calls the *dynamically sublime* (ibid.) (in contrast to the mathematically

sublime, which has to do with the magnitude of numbers); the word "might" is therefore a translation of the German "Macht". As Kant suggests in an earlier chapter, "it is remarkable that, although we have no interest whatever in an object—i.e. its existence is indifferent to us—yet its mere size, even if it is considered as formless, may bring a satisfaction that is universally communicated with it" (Critique of Judgment XXV (1790), in Adams 1992: 388). Kant continues like Burke before him by referring to distance: "[T]he sight of them is the more attractive, the more fearful it is, provided only that we are in security" (Critique of Judgment XXVII (1790), in Adams 1992: 390). Likewise Burke wrote that distance confers pleasure upon pain. At a distance, the terrors of nature—an eruption, for example—may be regarded as an "example of the awesome destructive power of nature" (Shaw 2017: 7).

But then Kant adds that

> we willingly call these objects [in nature] sublime, because they raise the energies of the soul above their accustomed height and discover in us a faculty of resistance of a quite different kind, which gives us courage to measure ourselves against the apparent almightiness of nature (Critique of Judgment XXVIII (1790) in Adams ibid.).[16]

The resistance Kant is talking about in this 28th section of the *Critique of Judgment* is a resistance to being subsumed by the powerful sublime. It is the faculty to make reason intervene and provide "man" with an awareness of the superiority of mind relative to nature, "even in its immensity". Reason, therefore, prevents the subject from succumbing to the power of the sublime, or in more contemporary terms: reason contributes to sublimation, that the subject does not throw himself into the sublime abyss. The subject, for its part, is also reminded by the sublime of the power of reason:

> And so also the irresistibility of its might, while making us recognize our own physical impotence, considered as beings of nature, discloses to us a faculty of judging independently of and a superiority over nature, on which is based a kind of self-preservation entirely different from that which can be attacked

> and brought into danger by external nature (Critique of Judgment XXVIII (1790), in Adams 1992: 391).

One could say that the aesthetic experience by name of the sublime Kant discusses rests ambiguously between reason and imagination, the subordination to the power of the formless and unrepresentable. In this ambiguity, Christine Battersby (2007) argues in her shrewd take on the construction of the subject as male in Kant, "the I seems to deprive itself of its imaginative powers, but, at the same time, also experiences itself as strengthened through surrendering itself to reason" (2007: 34).

Since Burke, who distinguished sharply between the "small", conventional beauty and the "great" sublime, which provokes awe and wonder (Shaw 2017: 80), there has been a recurrent discussion about differences between the beautiful and the sublime within this field. Philip Shaw (2017) covers this discussion excellently in his book by drawing on a range of feminist scholars, who demonstrate the gendered discourse of the sublime. Shaw summarizes in the introduction to the book how the sublime has mostly been regarded as the superior feeling, connected with instability, unboundedness and formlessness, whereas beauty is the customary, the harmonious and simply formed:

> The sublime is greater than the beautiful; the sublime is dark, profound and overwhelming and implicitly masculine, whereas the beautiful is light, fleeting and charming and implicitly feminine. Where the sublime is a divisive force, encouraging feelings of difference and deference, the beautiful encourages a spirit of unity and harmony (Shaw 2017: 12).

There are no dissonances in beauty, argues Kant: "The mind feels itself *moved* in the representation of the sublime in nature, while in aesthetical judgments about the beautiful it is in *restful* contemplation" (Critique of Judgment XXVII (1790), in Adams 1992: 390—italics in original). Kant begins the second book of the *Critique of Judgment* (Adams 1992: 386–87) by stating that there are similarities between the sublime and the beautiful: both states please the mind (though in different ways), and as judgments, they are at once singular and universally valid. But he is mostly occupied with the differences

between form (the beautiful) and formlessness (the sublime) and how they affect the imagination differently.

Philosopher Emily Brady says in the first line of her book about the sublime and nature: “The sublime is a massive concept” (2013: 1). It regards overpowering, unorderly, awe-inspiring states of feeling in relation to textual presentations of the extraordinary, often attached to unbounded magnitudes almost beyond comprehension (in rhetoric, poetry, visual arts and audio-visuality). Philip Shaw ends one of his chapters about the contemporary sublime with a short note on resistance, which he has adopted from Kant but understands quite differently: “The value of the sublime consists therefore precisely in its resistance to rationalist appropriation (Shaw 2017: 89). Accordingly, Shaw insists that “the sublime is ultimately political” (ibid.). It refuses to fit into established categories; it even questions categories.

To return to David Lynch, he has always denied that his films are political. “There’s no winning in politics. It’s something I don’t even know a bit about,” he said in an interview in 1990 (Breskin 2009: 101). Contemporary politics, in Lynch’s words, “[is] a losing game and it has nothing to do with the films I’m making” (ibid.: 102). And furthermore: “I’m not really a political person” (Carroll 2018).[17] This explicitly announced disinterest fits in well with Lynch’s overall thinking about giving his films freely to any individual interpretation. Nevertheless, in the preceding chapter I suggested by quoting early Romantic thinker Friedrich Schlegel that Lynch’s fragments could be seen as “marginal glosses to the text of the age”. It goes for his sublime images that even though not explicitly political, they contribute with different and eye-opening ways of seeing, disturbing atmospheres and, ultimately, strange worlds that may profoundly shake our way of understanding the world and make us surrender to extraordinary states of feeling that provoke reflection.[18]

The uncanny and the sublime in Lynch’s work may in different ways pull the carpet from under our feet and for short passages of time create unfamiliar, ambiguous feelings of pleasure and displeasure. These momentary feelings may be so much stronger because of the fragmentary form’s detachment from narrative causality. I called the image of Lula and Sailor in the field sublime because of the immensity of the view. Paradoxically, the extreme wide angle creates a view that

makes us aware of the limits of our world. Thus, at the same time as the beyond beautiful image and the Strauss music embraces us in tremendous pleasure, it also forces us to surrender to a powerlessness, a sense of losing ourselves in the excessively vast landscape bordering to the limits of the earth. Kant emphasizes that "[i]f nature is to be judged by us as dynamically sublime, it must be represented as exciting fear" (*Critique of Judgment* XXVIII (1790), in Adams 1992: 390). The "Dance for Freedom" fragment excites the pleasure of immense beauty. However, the imagery also evokes feelings of the sublime by way of its strange unboundedness, which creates a dizzying feeling of falling off the earth.

In the "Floating Cube" fragment, by contrast (see pages 200–205), there is a mixture of the "spatial uncanny" (Vidler 1992) and the sublime. Mostly, the fragment evokes the sublime boundlessness, either by making dimensions disturbingly strange or showing the dark and infinite nothingness of the universe. Kant talks about how the immeasurable sublime is in need of a comparative scale to imagine magnitude. In Lynch's imagery, the strange and disproportionally large wall at the beginning of the fragment provides a glimpse of the sublime at the moment Cooper lands on the ledge. He seems very small and simultaneously the wall is made to look immense. The following shot also encompasses magnitude: the view down into the mauve ocean from somewhere extraordinarily high above. This shot repeats the impression of the boundlessness of the building and adds another sublime image connected with magnitude to the fragment. The connection of the sublime with infinite nature even applies to the shots from outside the cube. However, the fear connected with the sublime is more pronounced here than in the "Dance for Freedom" fragment. Moreover, there is nothing of the Romantic beauty in the immensity of the dark space and the smallness and technological fragility of the cube floating in the boundless dark universe with the two people on top of it. Here the sublime is combined with a shocking feeling of uncanniness.

In his book about the architectural uncanny, Anthony Vidler distinguishes between the "vertigo of the sublime" and the "claustrophobia of the uncanny" (Vidler 1992: 39). While the sense of disorientation is similar, the question of scale is definitely what distinguishes the uncanny from the sublime. The moment of

uncanniness, when the familiar turns unfamiliar in the "Floating Cube" fragment, arises when Naido opens the hatch on top of the staircase and it appears that the room they have left is the inner of a small cube floating in space. The shock of the uncanny arises with this sudden, unexpected shift of space, but it is replaced with the sublime as the scene on top of the cube unfolds. Vice versa, the sublime feeling of fear and pleasure is reinforced by the introductory shock.

The starry space has been a source of the sublime elsewhere in Lynch's works—most notably in the closing scene in *The Straight Story* , in which the two brothers are reunited and sit together outside Lyle's house. The camera moves upward and, simultaneously with a change from day to night (like in *Boat*), there is a dissolve to the unbound starry sky, which the camera slowly travels into. There are other examples of the sublime, however none as frightening and awe-inspiring as the immense red carpet in the Glastonbury Grove (Illustrations 7.3) behind the circle of sycamore trees and the "opening to a gateway" that in the final episode of *Twin Peaks* suddenly emanates in the dark and seems to swallow Cooper.

Illustration 7.3 Framegrabs of the red carpet at the Glastonbury Grove, *Twin Peaks*

The carpet seems to continue into the sky and be held up by some transcendent power. Its sublimity attaches to it a sense of radical otherness, boundlessness "at the end of the world", as Windom Earle says to Annie before he drags her into the Black Lodge.[19] However, I will end this chapter by writing about the mind-blowing White Sands atomic bomb explosion fragment in the eighth episode of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, which follows after Nine Inch Nails' rapid pulse rendition of

“She’s Gone Away” at the Roadhouse has already alerted the viewers’ senses.

The White Sands Atomic Bomb Explosion in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Episode 8

Gordon Cole has a large black-and-white photograph of the atomic bomb explosion hanging in his office (in Episode 3), so the explosion in the eighth episode is in one sense a repetition. Still, it would be to put too much narrative meaning in this large photograph to see it as a warning notice. But the gesture of repetition adds to the White Sands fragment a surplus uncanniness from the very beginning. The scene starts with a dark black-and-white ultra-long, “drone-view” (Rooney 2018) shot of a desolate landscape on which the captions “July 16, 1945”, “White Sands New Mexico” and “5:29 AM (MWT)” are superimposed in white capital letters. A metallic off-screen voice counts down from 10, and on the sound of zero, the black picture turns blindingly white to the (*Psycho*-like) uncanny shrill sound of the first notes from Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki’s “Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima” (1960). From an all-encompassing view, we witness an atomic bomb explosion (recognizable by the mushroom cloud in the far distance) (Illustration 7.4). The images are anchored indexically to reality by the introductory information about the date, place and time of the explosion. The captions make us aware that what we see is footage from the so-called “Trinity test”, the first detonation of an atomic bomb in the US, which was the result of the US army’s Manhattan Project experiment (in collaboration with the UK and Canada) during WW2.

Illustration 7.4 Framegrab from the beginning of the White Sands episode, *Twin Peaks: The Return*

Over the next minute and a half, the camera moves very slowly, almost inescapably, from its "drone vision" distance (Christiansen 2017) high above the test site and its immeasurably vast surrounding towards the mushroom. At first the cloud looks small and insignificant, almost like a toy, in the overwhelmingly vast dark landscape. However, as the camera gets nearer it slowly increases, and finally, the camera, inescapably, goes deeper and deeper into the blast of fire, which changes into abstract colour and black-and-white patterns, black-and-white sparks of fire and light (reminiscent of the experiments with light, space and texture I discussed in Chap. 5), violent explosions of fire and eruptions of matter, and several multicoloured explosions whose epicentres the camera moves towards and seems to be engulfed by again and again. However, the camera evades destruction or even being disturbed, let alone shaken by the power of the explosion. As if it was operated by an invincible force, it continues its inward journey. Uncannily unstoppable, inevitably, it traverses, alternately rapidly and slowly, the flashing and gleaming explosions that seem to continue ad infinitum.

The continuous slow camera movement suggests a horrifying infinite space, into which it takes the viewer. Obviously the sequence is referring to the famous "Star Gate" sequence at the end of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), even though the "technological uncanny" (Mactaggart 2010) in *Twin Peaks: The Return* involves a narrative of the origin of an evil principle, not an exploration of the universe itself. This part enfolds an extraordinary combination of the uncanny and the sublime, the completely unknown and the dread of losing oneself to powers so much larger than oneself, but also of a disturbing feeling of surrendering to the frightfully beautiful. On the one hand, there is the uncanny feeling of claustrophobia in the relentless camera movement towards and into the explosion, the frightening feeling of being "taken" and being immersed, which is underscored by Penderecki's "noise music" for string instruments. On the other hand, there is the sublime infinity of the dark, strangely divine landscape, the feeling of the immeasurable, of being offered an unprecedented gaze of a grandness and formlessness beyond the understandable.

After approximately five minutes, this spectacle of the uncanny and sublime is replaced by the first of *Twin Peaks: The Return*'s convenience store scenes with the Woodsmen. Besides being itself a centre of the creative and destructive power of electricity, this space connects to the atomic bomb explosion by way of transference of energy. It looks as if a flash of lightning from the blast transforms images into negative images, multiplies the Woodsmen, just like the explosion immediately starts a process of multiplication, creates an immense amount of static with sputtering sounds and finally unsettles the camera, which shakes and quivers as if hit by the blast waves from the explosion. After roughly another three minutes, the sequence returns to the boundless, now completely dark space in the desert. A pale humanoid form floating in air spurts from its head an abject umbilicus-like transparent cord full of eggs, which moves towards the camera and reveals Bob's head in a transparent, womb-like bubble. So, maybe what we see, as has been suggested by many critics, is "the origin story of Bob" (Lehrer 2017)—a symbolic vision of how the modern evil principle and the frightening acknowledgement of the possibility of destroying massively by technological means was created out of this atomic blast. In the last

part of the sequence, there are more uncontrollable fire and powerful-beyond-understanding explosions, in which the camera moves rapidly through tunnels of sparks of coloured energy. Moreover, a golden orb moves towards the camera and dissolves in beautiful gold-coloured liquid sparks, like it was a fantasy of the creation of the universe.

Finally, the camera swims quickly through an ocean of red sparks, which then dissolves into a mauve vast matter reminiscent of the "Floating Cube" fragment in Episode 3. Just like at the beginning of the sequence, the camera moves rapidly across the surface of this matter, which is not desert soil this time. It turns out to be water we glimpse in the boundless dark images. Just like in the "Floating Cube" fragment, they create a sense of an incomprehensibly vast ocean in a nocturnal darkness that will never turn to light. The camera moves towards a solemn rock in the waves and tilts upwards towards a metallic fortress on the top. Again, an uncanny uncertainty is created as regards scale. The proportion of the top of the rock seems limited, yet as the camera slowly moves towards a tiny black square on the surface that looks like a window, our perception of proportions alters. As the small square becomes more visible, the building becomes immeasurably large. Again, the uncanny and the sublime coalesce in a feeling of uncertainty, but also awe confronted with the formless and unbounded; formlessness because the perception of scale continuously changes and pushes uncertainty to the forefront; unboundedness because the perspective is at once blurred and widened, before it reveals black-and-white mixed with golden images from another strange and spectacular room above the ocean.[20]

As for the first "horrifying, horrifyingly beautiful, thought-provoking and thought-annihilating" (Seitz 2017) White Sands part of the sequence, let me again put into words what I see on the screen—despite the recurrent claim that the sublime makes one wordless besides a "wow": a camera that relentlessly and mercilessly moves across infinite space towards the exploding eruptions of forces of immense power. Its ensuing frenetic speed into the infinite unknown and the closeness to the grandeur of the immeasurable destructive forces. Finally, the boundless vast ocean that stretches ad infinitum and almost merges with the sky, all accompanied by Lynch's music bordering on noise and the sounds of Penderecki's string instruments,

which contribute with a harrowing sense of dissonance and horror. The scene shifts from the sense of sublime that Kant propagated, looked at from a distance. When the camera comes very close to the fire and the power, there is nothing of the distance that to Kant made possible the sublimation of the sublime for reason to prevail. The sublime in this second part of the scene merges with the uncanny; the extreme, overwhelming power is so close that the feeling it creates borders on death.[21]

There is a documentary anchoring to reality in the first part of the sequence, where we are given information about the exact time and place of the detonation followed by the disembodied sound of the countdown to the frightening zero of an explosion never before experienced in the history of the human invention of weapon technology. The black-and-white footage moreover adds to the feeling of documentary real. However, the uncanny camera movement towards the explosion is computer generated, just like the mushroom cloud itself.[22] The imagery of the blast reiterates a historical incident, but it is more like a re-enactment of the explosion as a digitized sublime spectacle: of what the unimaginable forces it created might have looked like at the time of the explosion. The captions anchor the explosion in a past reality and frame the images indexically as archival footage. However, this is not authentic visual material. The digital uncanny in this sequence is that it is impossible to tell the CGI-produced fantasy from reality. The digitally created images of a historical event not only create a presence of the past in the present, to paraphrase John Jervis (2008), but reinserts the past *in the present as present*. The really uncanny with this sublime imagery, therefore, is that it suggests that the historical event may be repeated. The fear and awe produced by the sublime imagery in the White Sands sequence may then also create an uncanny feeling of repetition by suggesting that this might be now.

The White Sands explosion imagery expresses how Lynch is able to make powerful images by means of digital equipment. The sequence condenses the uncanny and the sublime in ultra-long shots, which are then replaced by extreme close-ups. It starts with sublime images of the frightening vast and boundless desert and the explosion in the far distance, and then it continues with claustrophobic, extreme close-ups of the fire. There is also an uncanny inevitability to the long-shot

sublime images, which is caused by the ultra-slow camera movement towards the blast. The slow continuous movement prevents the viewer from contemplating the grandiose, awe-inspiring imagery from a distance, which makes it feel controllable. The uncanny camera movement's slow elimination of distance thus enhances the feeling of being shaken to the core vis-à-vis the sublime in nature that Burke was talking about. Indeed, one could experience—to paraphrase from an early 1990s conversation about the uncanny and the sublime between American artist Mike Kelley and art historian Thomas McEvilley—that "[o]ne is witnessing a thing whose inner meaning is one's own annihilation" (2003 [1993]: 63).

Along the line of Kant's thinking about the sublime, the camera movement diminishes the possibility of sublimation/reasoning and increases the fear connected with the sublime. Nevertheless, the fear and awe of the sublime imagery might also make the viewer reflect upon how something so frightening can be represented as so sublime. At the same time as the camera movement forces the viewer towards the explosion, it might provoke reflections on the destructive power in modern weapon technology and on the annihilation of mankind. In summary, I argue that the distance Kant thought about as a requirement for not being subsumed by the awe of the boundless, in the case of the White Sands explosion imagery is slowly eliminated by the impossible camera movement *towards* the explosion. However, the closer the camera comes, the more the explosion becomes suffocating, and the harder it is not to start reflecting upon its fatal destructive powers. I could have discussed the White Sands atomic bomb explosion in the previous chapter as well. It is another example of how the fragment structure can be used to create extraordinary condensed imagery and affective atmospheres , which may enable us to perceive and think differently.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
A. Jerslev, *David Lynch*
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73924-9_8

8. Conclusion

Anne Jerslev[1]
(1) Department of Communication, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Anne Jerslev
Email: jerslev@hum.ku.dk

The Blurring of Boundaries—Again

Around the middle of the 1950s, Theodor W. Adorno (1984 [1958]) wrote an illuminating article about the essay as a form whose points can to some extent be applied to both Lynch's work and to the scholarly take on his work, which I have presented in this book. Adorno's main point about the essay is that it is knowledgeable, while it simultaneously refuses exhaustiveness. The essay, says Adorno, "stops where it feels itself complete—not where nothing is left to say" (1984 [1958]: 152). It rejects totality, and it favours "the fragmentary, the partial rather than the total" (ibid.: 157). Its way of thinking is searching and transversal, and it thinks critically albeit not politically. The essay's totality, Adorno says "is that of non-totality" (ibid.: 165), and he praises it for challenging the "theoretically outmoded claims of totality and continuity [...]. If the essay struggles aesthetically against that narrow-minded method that will leave nothing out, it is obeying an epistemological motive" (ibid.: 164). Accordingly, he suggests that the essay "must let the totality light up in one of its chosen or haphazard features but without asserting that the whole is present" (ibid.).

Even though Adorno's article is about the essay, and even though I would not call Lynch a downright visual essayist, Adorno's appreciation of the essay as text encapsulates perfectly Lynch's total work as exactly

not a coherent whole that never aims at a whole but embraces a diversity of fields in (audio-visual) culture. The way I have approached Lynch's work in this book also echoes Adorno's thinking. I have highlighted fragments and parts of Lynch's work in order to discuss his aesthetic forms, his exploration of different media's affordances and his ways of creating worlds and atmospheres. I have not aimed at offering an irrefutable, all-encompassing view of Lynch's work. On the contrary, the book is full of adverbs like "as if", "seemingly" and "apparently", in addition to verbs like "appears" and "seems to". I have primarily elaborated on the argument which has occupied me since my first book: that blurring of boundaries runs through his entire work.

Lynch has himself touched upon thoughts which are similar to the ones that Adorno ventured. I already quoted Lynch in a statement, which precisely illustrates his epistemology of "non-totality", you could say. I repeat it again in this conclusion: "When you only see a part, it's even stronger than seeing the whole. The whole might have a logic, but out of its context, the fragment takes on a tremendous value of abstraction" (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 231). To me, the statement summarises not only Lynch's fascination with the fragment but comprises the essence of his work, just like it speaks about the importance of his work for contemporary times. It elucidates the incoherent, the fragmented, the decontextualised, the blurred and the opaque in the form of the abstract—that which is not immediately recognisable and transparent. It favours the aesthetically "strong" that comprises what I have in this book recurrently referred to as affective atmospheres—often in the form of the frightening and the mysterious. The importance of Lynch's work to me is that it denies straight-out totalities and coherences. It denies what is pleasant and easily consumable by often pushing on several sensory registers.

In an essay about *Lost Highway* , novelist David Foster Wallace (1996) used a heading called "What exactly David Lynch Seems to Want From You", following the statement that we usually know "what a movie wants from us" (also quoted in Powers 2009 [2001]: 223). However, I want to rephrase his claim and instead suggest the sentence "you never know what you can expect from a Lynch work". Moreover, you never know exactly what you got from it—you are just sure that it affected you. The challenge with Lynch's work, what is so fascinating, and, I

suggest, what makes it an important voice in contemporary culture is that the viewer is seldom offered a fixed, unambiguous position from which to contemplate a work. Not even *The Elephant Man* or *The Straight Story* are entirely transparent and coherent, narratively and aesthetically. Neither are audiences offered custom-made meanings. Lynch himself does not reveal what it is he is after besides following his "ideas" and creating "worlds". It is up to the viewer. The only sure thing is that you are quite certain to get something valuable from any one of his works.

I have engaged with the blurring of boundaries across Lynch's entire body of work in this book. And vice versa, because I have been interested in the blurring of boundaries as a characteristic of Lynch's way of thinking and working, I have been occupied with his entire body of work and how he uses genre and media in different and similar ways to this end. Lynch's works challenge customary dichotomies and habitual rules of understanding, no matter the medium and genre. Therefore, the Lynch *oeuvre* I have looked into in this book comprises all the genres and media he has worked with (even though I have certainly not gone into all of it). A Lynch commercial, a mixed-media painting, a short film or a part of an episode of a TV series have been of equal interest to me. I have thus taken an intermedia approach to his work, and I started with a lengthy discussion of *The Air is on Fire* exhibition from 2007 as a truly Lynchian intermedia work. My thinking of the exhibition as *a work in itself* has been pivotal to the book's discussion of the blurring of boundaries, so I summarise points of the discussion again.

This first larger Lynch exhibition outside the US differ significantly from his other larger exhibitions to the extent that it formed a space, dense with atmosphere, which was just as Lynchian as any of the works displayed in the rooms. The exhibition showed a range of genres and art forms at the same time as it continuously transgressed and subverted the defining limits of each art form. The sound and the mise en scène of the exhibition rooms made the works speak to each other and to the surroundings. Moreover, the spatial architecture and the Fondation Cartier building's glass facade created an unlimited environment of reflections and doublings of inside and outside. By virtue of the interaction between things, people, the exhibition building

and the atmosphere, *The Air is on Fire* thus comprised a world within a real, non-mediated, three-dimensional space.

I have been drawing on German philosopher Gernot Böhme's writing on the notion of atmosphere. As I have shown throughout the book, atmosphere is an important aesthetic term when it comes to understanding intermedia space and the effect of the continuous blurring of boundaries between media and genres. As "in-between phenomena" (Blom 2007), atmospheres are what connect subjects and objects. Similarly, thinking of atmospheres involves thinking about (art) objects as "things" which yield some of their "object-ness" to their surroundings, to spaces and people. So, focusing on atmosphere as an aesthetic concept implies not only zooming in on the blurring of boundaries between subject and object but also attending to and questioning the very confines of the (art) objects that are—for example in the context of *The Air is on Fire*—forced, so to speak, to give up something of themselves to the exhibition space and the people in it.

By way of including the Fondation Cartier building and the sound and mise en scène of the rooms in conceptualising the exhibition, my point in Chap. 2 was that *The Air is on Fire* blurs boundaries between the exhibition and the installation, and I named it an installational exhibition. Thus, I claim that this ephemeral work, the 2007 Paris exhibition, is essential for understanding the blurring of boundaries in Lynch's work and for his working and thinking. I therefore opposed labelling *The Air is on Fire* as a "retrospective". It was a work in the present which, significantly, was not organised along a continuous line from the early to the most recent works. It was up to the visitors to think of changes and developments in time—if that was what they saw and heard.

The Air is on Fire was extremely powerful and ephemeral at one and the same time. Since it closed, it exists as a range of other media products which are not able to convey the same feeling of atmosphere and world. Most importantly, an intermedia exhibition catalogue was produced, which included a double CD with a recording of Lynch's conversation with Kristine McKenna about the works being displayed. Second, diverse videos were uploaded to YouTube, some of which show Lynch showing invited people around in the exhibition or talking about it in interviews.

Worlds and the Blurring of Boundaries between Dream and Reality

David Lynch's work is rich *with the blurring of boundaries between dreams and reality* in the form of confusing and often frightening spaces or worlds. Moreover, there are no hierarchies between these frequently intertwined spaces. Timothy Holland wrote illuminatingly in his article about the *Crazy Clown Time* music video that Lynch

> in his films unveils a multitude of worlds existing close to or within the next, different worlds that refuse to separate or converge as one, worlds that resist both their own self-identity and their complete absorption into the other. (Holland 2016: 458)

Holland pointed to the multitude of worlds which characterise Lynch's films and how they are entangled and without clear confines. This observation applies not only to his films but certainly also to *Twin Peaks* and *Twin Peaks: The Return* and to the other works I discuss. However, let me briefly query Holland's use of the word *unveil* and suggest that one prominent way in which Lynch makes worlds and access to worlds is by *veiling* , not only in fragments but scattered across his audio-visual works. As I discussed in Chap. 6, veiling means the layering on top of each other of images that at once form opaque thresholds and create blurry, indefinite worlds.

As I have shown throughout this book, worlds, their demarcation and their "reality status" is uncertain. But what is a *world* in Lynch's work? In some ways, his use of the word recalls literary scholar Marie-Laure Ryan's understanding of a fictive world as another place in which one is immersed. Ryan has thoroughly theorised the concept of fictional world and immersion as a bodily and cognitive engagement with reading (2001, 2013). Even though she is working with literary texts, her thoughts can be useful to shed light on the significance of Lynch's (use of the word) worlds and the feeling of immersion they create. Basically, world creation is what literature does, Ryan claims. Therefore, "[f]or immersion to take place, the text must offer an *expanse* to be immersed in" (2001: 90—my italics). A fictive world, in Ryan's thinking,

consists of spaces, people and things and people relating (narratively) to each other and to things in spaces. Ryan is interested in what she calls narrative worlds or mimetic worlds and an "immersive poetics" (ibid.: 91), but she also argues at length against the critical tradition of understanding immersion as passive absorption.

She suggests broadly that "possible worlds" encompass what she calls "the logic of fictionality" (ibid.: 99) and she emphasises that there may be a multitude of possible worlds:

> What does it mean, in semantic and ontological terms, to be transported into the virtual reality of a fictional world? The answers to these questions are tied to an ontological model that acknowledges a plurality of possible worlds. (ibid.)

Ryan reserves the term "impossible worlds" for worlds which are in a sense non-accessible (contradictory, containing ontological spatial and temporal impossibilities) or, as she phrases it, "texts that could never be written" (Ryan 2013: 141). However, she maintains that it applies for both possible and impossible worlds that they leave room for exploration, simply on account of being worlds or universes. They always keep something hidden: a world "offers an inexhaustible space of discovery" (ibid.: 143).

To Ryan, many Lynch worlds would probably not count as worlds, not even impossible worlds like the twisted worlds in *Lost Highway* , *Mulholland Drive* and *Inland Empire* . *Lost Highway* comprises what Ryan calls an "excess of dimensions" (Ryan 2013: 144); she ponders "I cannot imagine myself inside a world shaped like a Moebius strip where the inside becomes the outside and the outside becomes the inside" (ibid.). Additionally, Ryan sees a literary world as rhetorically constructed from the outside. As such, Lynch's continuous oscillation between placing himself outside (as the artist who realises his "ideas") and inside a work (as an actor or as a singer or using his own private environment as location) would impede Ryan's conceptualisation of a world. On the other hand—and despite Holland's points above—Ryan's thinking of being transported by some (rhetorical) means into another (impossible), not entirely transparent world, which is different from our ordinary world, detaches us from our ordinary world and makes

the ordinary strange is not far from the way Lynch uses the term. However, whereas Ryan emphasises the necessary return to the "ordinary" world from the fictional world, Lynch's worlds are on a par with each other, and there is no smooth exit or return.

In Lynch's work, worlds are *spaces of otherness* into which the viewer can be immersed affectively and go dreaming. Of course, Lynch's worlds are not made up of words but of images and sounds that demand the activity of the imagination in another way. The unsharp, enigmatic images scattered throughout his work and intertwined everywhere with the ever-present sound and noise create this feeling of blurred boundaries and being surrounded by a different, strange world, one often frightening but also compelling. As I argued in Chap. 5, Lynch's worlds are not necessarily universes populated with people and things. Therefore, Ryan's notion of "expanse" must be understood in a more abstract way in Lynch. By way of exemplifying this, I return to Lynch's words about blackness, which I cited in Chap. 2. In the quote (p. 54), Lynch described exactly a world that was drawn up of darkness: "Black has depth" and therefore, "you can go into it". Blackness is like a dense atmosphere one can enter like a dream space. A world in Lynch would always be what Ryan calls an impossible world, such as the "Red Room" or the inside of a radiator in *Eraserhead* . Impossible worlds are created in Lynch's photographs of deserted factories (that are entirely without people) or the strange living room in *The Air is on Fire*. But worlds are also merely blurry environments.

In Lynch's work, worlds are tightly connected to atmospheres. Atmosphere may in itself define a world as a space out of place, so to speak, like the Madison house in the first part of *Lost Highway* or the dreamy elsewhere in the credit sequence scene in *Mulholland Drive*, composed of the slow, ghostly driving of a car as if on its own, the darkness, the red rear lights and the digital orchestra sound interspersed with one long shot from above the LA city lights. In summary, worlds in Lynch are more like affective environments, and they are only demarcated to the extent that they are held together by a certain atmosphere.

Repetition and the Blurring of Boundaries

In Chap. 3, I argued that in addition to the disintegration of time in Lynch's fiction films, which has often been remarked upon by critics and scholars, a sense of linear and continuous time could be tracked in Lynch's works. But even the passing of time has never unfolded simply along a straight, continuous line. I used the palimpsest as a term for the unorganised traces of time's passing on both the human body (in Alvin's face in *The Straight* Story and in the ageing of characters in *Twin Peaks: The Return*) and on things (the photographs of decaying factories, for example). Yet, another sense of temporality pervades Lynch's work, which I will think through in a little more detail in this conclusion. This revolves around the *temporality of repetition* .

Repetitions abound, but they are of different kinds. There is the endless repetition of mechanical movements and the same noise rhythm in the *Industrial Soundscape* short and the music video *I Have a Radio*, which I discussed in Chap. 5. There is the repetition in titles of the words written on some of the paintings—as if repetition eliminated any meaning connected with the title. There is the woman in *The Straight Story* (the "Deer Woman") who keeps hitting deer with her car even though there seems to be no natural hiding place for them in the flat landscape around her. There is the man in a wheelchair by the end of *Wild at Heart*, who passes a car accident and says that "the same fucking thing happened to me last year". These are accidental repetitions, but there are also the more traumatic repetitions that create feelings of uncanniness: the girl in the car accident in *Wild at Heart* who keeps repeating the same sentences in her dying moment and James Hurley repeats exactly the same song after 25 years in *Twin Peaks: The Return*. On stage at the Roadhouse in *Twin Peaks*, the Giant repeats that something is repeating itself: "It is happening again. It is happening again". The compulsion to repeat being at the centre of the Freudian understanding of the uncanny, the Giant's message to Cooper epitomises repetition as essentially uncanny. There is the woodsman in the "Gotta Light?" episode of *Twin Peaks: The Return* who keeps mechanically repeating the same question and the same lines. Moreover, there are narratives apparently beginning to repeat themselves, like the *Lost Highway* narrative, and finally, I argued in Chap. 7 that Lynch's digital rendering of the Trinity test in the eighth

episode of *Twin Peaks: The Return* suggests that history may repeat itself.

It is not repetition as the reassuring recurrence of the same that Lynch puts into images and words in his works—the cyclical natural (seasons) or social (daily routines) repetition—but rather it is repetition as an abstract, contingent, nerve-wracking or disturbing force. There is no variation in the mentioned repetitions, just sameness—which is what makes repetition so meaningless. Repetition brings about a disturbing sense of dehumanisation and disempowerment. *The Industrial Soundscape* experiment boils down to the enactment of repetition as the mindless execution of the same mechanical movements, without ending and without human attendance. "Deer Woman's" colliding with deer again and again in *The Straight Story* implies lack of agency, which makes her cry in desperation that "still, every week, I plow into at least one deer. I have hit thirteen deer in the past seven weeks driving down this road, mister. And I have to drive down this road every day, forty miles back and forth to work … Where do they come from?" Finally, repetition is constituted as a compulsion, for example, embodied in the murderous Leland Palmer as possessed by Bob.

This kind of compulsory, non-agentic repetition is what the Giant articulates by using the present participle and the third person in the neuter: the act to which he is referring has no agent. He is just naming an action as if it were taking place by itself right now. Repetition in Lynch may thus come with a lack of agency and, hence, subjectivity and with a lack of free will to act and to own one's life. Repetition stands for the frightening, the meaningless and the absurd. In addition, repetition enacts a temporal standstill. In one sense, time is passing. In another sense, it is getting nowhere, and characters may be stuck in time or in a time loop. Repetition may thus constitute an atmosphere of pointlessness.

However, as embodied by David Lynch himself, an additional kind of repetition can be traced in the Lynch oeuvre. His continuous repetition of the same phrases, almost word for word over the years, bears witness to his reluctance to talk about meaning in his works. In this sense, repetition in Lynch's public talks can be regarded as a performance of pointlessness with an ironic twist. However, I suggest

that there is another meaning in his almost ritualistic verbal juggling with repetition that could be summarised as a resistance to the tradition of ascribing to the artist a discourse of progression and change, seeing him or her as developing from one phase to the next during his career. Just as David Lynch mostly refuses to think of time in terms of linearity, continuity and development—and just like the works in *The Air is on Fire* are displayed without chronology—the fact that he can communicate by way of almost the exact same sentences again and again may be a regarded as a refusal to play the game of the artist maturing into genius. More broadly, his verbal performance may be regarded as a deconstruction of linear progress, which corresponds well with the overall, fragmented, non-totality-driven structure of Lynch's total work (I also repeat Lynch quotes in this book).

The irony in Lynch's verbal repetitions adds a humorous tone to repetition in his total body of work. This tone also accompanies his long-lasting series of "David Lynch's Weather Report", which started on his website and is now uploaded to his YouTube channel on a daily basis. Seriality is undoubtedly a different kind of repetition due to its continuous interplay between repetition and renewal. However, I end this section with a brief comment on repetition in the more recent "David Lynch's Weather Report" (also mentioned in Chap. 4), in which Lynch in the morning from his office offers a weather report. He addresses the viewers directly and always starts by giving the date and the weekday. Then he informs about the actual weather in Los Angeles and the temperature (always given in both Fahrenheit and Celsius) he estimates the afternoon will bring. He also confides to the viewers that he has "been thinking" and explains shortly what he has been thinking about (a lot of different things over the weeks but often a song). Almost every weather report ends ritualistically with the same words: despite the cloudy and chilly morning, along will come "some beautiful blue skies and golden sunshine, all along the way". The clips end with a smiling David Lynch enthusiastically saluting the viewers by saying: "Everyone—have a great day!"

Despite the straight-out linear temporality built into the genre and the repetitive uploads, "David Lynch's Weather Report" constructs an ambiguous sense of time, just like Lynch does elsewhere. On the one hand, David Lynch's Weather Reports are recurrent, and each report

starts by giving the date, the day of the week and the forecast for the weather on the date. It thus offers a reassuring sense of time as linear and continuous. But the ending of the short clips, in which the same words are repeated day after day, bursts this sense of temporal continuity simply by making the weather forecast the exact same each day. Moreover, even though the daily report is apparently made in the early morning, Lynch repeats the formulation "today, I was thinking about" in a strange past tense. Finally, Lynch also seems to make a joke of blurring boundaries between the weather report genre's scientific predictions and a dream scenario of not only sunshine but "golden sunshine" breaking through each day. Which draws a line back to the introduction of Dale Cooper in the *Twin Peaks* pilot. As one of the anonymous reviewers of my manuscript reminded me, Cooper, while driving towards Twin Peaks tells Diane in his dictaphone that it is "54 degrees on a slightly overcast day. Weatherman says rain. If you could get paid that kind of money for being wrong 60% of the time, it'd beat working". Weather report man David Lynch may be wrong, but since we are in Los Angeles, chances—more than scientific knowledge—are that his predictions of "golden sunshine" are right.

Blurry Images

The frequent use of superimpositions across Lynch's work creates a ubiquitous sense of veiling, as I discussed in Chap. 6. Transparent layers of images on top of each other provide a haptic feeling of materiality that it is possible, albeit with difficulty, to see through. Superimpositions mould spaces in between spaces, just like they blur boundaries between worlds. Ryan talks about being immersed or transported into another world as being built into the activity of reading. How this transport takes place is rather vaguely explained in her book; she simply references psychologist Richard Gerry for "performing certain actions" (Ryan 2001: 93) and points at rhetorical strategies that may create feelings of being immersed. In Lynch, on the other hand, the transition from one world to another is often made via some kind of threshold that does not demarcate worlds but establishes an atmospheric passage. Immersion means entering a passage and arriving "on the other side"—to repeat a line from Chrysta Bell's

beautiful singing of Bell's and Lynch's "Polish Poem" in *Inland Empire*. In Lynch, immersion in another world is not afforded by the transparency of the image or the medium but, by contrast, by being made aware of the passing into an elsewhere through layers of veils and thus being touched, so to speak, by the thin, transparent layers which at once demarcate and blur boundaries between worlds. Veiling thus creates a connection and a kind of liminal space at one and the same time.

Jacques Aumont (2017) has written about veiled images as an example of *uncertain images* (Beugnet, Cameron and Fetveit 2017), in which details are confused and blurred. He focuses primarily on the ways the rules of mainstream cinema can be broken by creating blurry or foggy images, for example by accepting too much light or even enforcing false light into the lens (either accidentally or deliberately). Whereas the veiling by interference of light that Jacques Aumont talks about forms a single-layer, blurry motif, the indistinctness produced by superimposition in Lynch is created by different images on top of each other, as it were, which mutually confer indistinctness on each other. Even so, it goes for both kinds of images that they uphold a fragile balance "between something and nothing" (Dezeuze 2017: 9).

Superimposition is one example of the blurring of boundaries on a micro level that we find everywhere in Lynch in the form of barely discernible motifs and a focus on the image surface. Examples of these blurrings include the textured ultra-close-ups in credit sequences or in some of Lynch's photographs, the blurry images bordering on abstraction or painterly strokes in his works with the PD-150 camera, the rendering of parts of photographs and audio-visual spaces in the dark, the ultra-fast shaking images, the blurring of contours by roboscopic lightning, the over- and underexposure of the image, the temporal slowing down in order to blur images, the turning of positive into negative image or the playing with scale. All of these visual strategies are usually emphasised by the use of noise, which renders the seen difficult to perceive and makes it hard to focus.

Asbjørn Grønstad writes about *Inland Empire* and *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Episode 8 ("Gotta Light?") as examples of a subdivision of "aesthetic opacity" that he calls "narrative opacity", "works upon which issues of spatial warping, architectural uncanniness, psychic agony, and

interpretive impenetrability all coalesce" (2020: 119). Grønstad could have paid much more attention to Lynch's different image blurrings listed above, which would have been pertinent examples of his second kind of opacity, "artistic works whose properties are deliberately inscrutable, informationally sparse, or contentless" (2020: 22). The examples from the above list are scattered across Lynch's audio-visual work and in the *Boat* experiment, the *Duran Duran Unstaged* concert film tour de force (directed by Lynch, photographed by long-time Lynch photographer Peter Deming) and the second half of *Lady Blue Shanghai* , every single image is blurred somehow. But apart from Grønstad, none of the writers (coming from film studies and studies of contemporary art) who have discussed the only slightly different aesthetic terms "opacity" (Grønstad 2020), "precarious visualities" (Asselin, Lamoureux and Ross (eds.) 2008; Dezeuze 2017; Maroja, Menezes and Poltronieri (eds.) 2014) and "indefinite visions" (Beugnet, Cameron and Fetveit (eds.) 2017) have looked into Lynch's blurry imagery.

In the introduction to this book, I exemplified the blurring of boundaries between media with a short discussion of the mixed-media painting *Hello* . Likewise, in this conclusion, I will shortly give one more example of the *blurring* of boundaries on the image level by describing the beginning of *Duran Duran Unstaged* (which I have mentioned as an example of *visual noise* in connection with the discussion of the *Crazy Clown Time* video in Chap. 5) (Illustration 8.1).

Illustration 8.1 Framegrab from *Duran Duran Unstaged*

The almost two-hour long concert video—what Lynch called a “live cyberspace concert”—was recorded at the Duran Duran concert at the Mayan Theatre in Los Angeles in 2011 and streamed live on YouTube. This is the explanation for Lynch’s observation in the opening that “this is not your normal concert; this will be an experiment” of “spontaneous” images. Simultaneously, he paid tribute to the affordance of live transmission by “hoping for some happy accidents” (maybe also with a greeting to the trouble during his *Industrial Symphony No 1*. live events in 1989 (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 208–212)). The streamed video consisted of the live recording of the concert superimposed with prerecorded material and images of small objects that Lynch had constructed and placed around the theatre. As Simon le Bon said about Lynch: “It was quite bizarre, the Mayan Theater, and he set it up in a very strange way, with little niches and nooks and crannies all the way around the theater, with little tableaus, grottoes with decorations and tables and things” (Appelo 2014). The concert video was released on DVD in 2014 after one-night-only cinema screenings in selected theatres across the US. The video is mainly black and white, even though it also has colour added, for example yellow-golden veiling by means of light and red hair on keyboardist Nick Rhodes, as if it were painted on the celluloid strip as in early cinema.

The image side consists of superimpositions in excess, veiling through light (like Aumont’s examples) or by gauze-like patterning, blurring of positive into negative images, overexposure, violent, ultra-fast image shaking that transform into pure patterns of light and dark and out-of-focus dissolution of motifs that change into black-and-white abstractions. Moreover, surrealist images are superimposed: an old-fashioned radio is copied into the image frame, delivering gross news (as in *Wild at Heart*). A hand in a black glove is hammering black nails into a white surface in step with the music. A blue globe is rotating in the middle of the screen. A skewed full shot of a suburban house in the dark lighted by flashing appears, in addition to fire, smoke coming from small sculptures, images of two persons performing robot-like movements and sausages being barbecued, with a hand with a grill spatula beating on the grill in step with the music.

An array of well-known Lynchian strategies for blurring and lack of definition are used in this powerful concert film, which opens with a

short welcome by a cool Lynch wearing dark glasses and presumably sitting among his digital equipment at the live event. As in the *Crazy Clown Time* video and at the beginning of *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* , the start comprises ultra-close-ups in black and white of flickering static captured by a shaky camera. Fast-edited, shaky, indistinct, pixellated close-ups of Lynch continue for the next minute until he announces that "with a snap of my finger, the concert will begin" (Laura Palmer's posture in the "Red Room" comes to mind), and the next ultra-shaky image is of a blurry digital clapboard that counts down (in tune with repetitive, digitally produced sounds). A light-blueish hand wipes the black off a glass plate reminiscent of early photographic plates, and the camera zooms slowly into the plate and onto a coloured black, white and blue abstraction, which is then superimposed with the name Duran Duran in shaky, slightly oblique white letters on a black background, and the concert begins.

Just like the music in the video, Lynch's voice stays stable and unaffected despite the extremely blurry and shaky multiple-layered images. Whereas the *Crazy Clown Time* music video is a messy and provocative perfect blending of noise music and blurry and shaky images, there is an excess of superimpositions in the almost two-hour long video that accompanies Duran Duran's more pleasant music. But both music video works are examples of what I have called *visual noise* in the fifth chapter of this book.

I see the opening of the concert video as partaking in what Grønstad calls "an art of opacity". It also fits in with Martine Beugnet's claim about the moving image in *Indefinite Visions* as "a manifestation of the vague, the obscure, the fragmentary and confused—as a site of potentiality" (2017: 10). The volumes I referred to above all maintain that "the blurred", "the opaque", "the precarious" and "the illegible" (the concepts mean something slightly different but are also overlapping) oppose a mainstream aesthetic that favours the transparent, the well-defined, the sharp, high resolution and the invisibility of the medium. As Grønstad puts it: "contemporary culture is doused in a pervasive yet largely unquestioned faith in the preeminence of transparency, of total illumination" (2020: 4). In some of the mentioned works (Maroja, Menezes and Poltronieri 2014; Dezeuze 2017; Grønstad 2020), the precarious aesthetic is linked to Judith Butler's famous writing about

precarious lives and whose lives are grievable. Consequently, the works analysed in the books and volumes are seen as speaking to the vulnerability of contemporary times by inscribing "vulnerability into the formal affordances of the work itself" (Grønstad 2020: 4). Moreover, as Christine Ross writes in her introduction to *Precarious Visualities*, "all these aesthetic strategies [...] concern a spectator whose seeing activity is being embodied through precarious attachments" (2008: 8).

These are truly inspiring reflections, which may boil down to the argument that precarious aesthetics reflects the precarious condition of contemporary destabilising, contingent, insecure, fragile times. Asbjørn Grønstad touches on the power inherent in the precarious, though. He suggests that "phenomena identifiable as instantiations of a precarious aesthetic may possess a particular force, or power, and this force might be locatable precisely in their very precariousness" (ibid.: 12). When it comes to David Lynch and the examples of blurry imagery scattered around his work, which I have instead labelled *visual noise* , I think the *power* residing in his blurred images is evident, and it is hard not to be affected by the forceful atmospheres radiating from them. My point is that in Lynch precarious aesthetics is counterbalanced by a vital force inherent in the blurry, dark, opaque imagery. They may unsettle vision and create a sense of vulnerability, but they also invite immersion into a cornucopia of visual images and sound.

Indeed, David Lynch's entire work constitutes a field marked by destabilisation, perceptual disorientation and uncertainty, and it is often permeated by an atmosphere of the frightening and the uncanny. Rarely do his fictional works offer the "intellectual mastery" which makes feelings of fear and uncanniness disappear, to refer to Ernst Jentsch's (1996 [1906]) discussion of the uncanny. Darkness and deep shadows are ubiquitous in Lynch's audio-visual works and photography, and the shadows always seem to hide something, a dark force or a mystery that may never be resolved but which draws audiences in closer, just like the weirdness in his paintings—their motifs and materiality—does. Moreover, noise disturbs equilibrium and sense of spatial confines everywhere. David Lynch's work is against clarity and distinctness, one could say, bearing in mind his aversion to things getting too clear. I have primarily used the term *visual noise* for

his blurry PD-150 aesthetic, but visual noise in Lynch is produced by other means as well, for example through shadows, darkness, veiling and sound/noise. So, to conclude with respect to the terminology related to blurred images outlined above, I use *visual noise* to label a prominent aesthetic tendency across Lynch's work. As I outlined in Chap. 5, the term refers to the visual but also to the aural as well as to the forceful combination of the visual and the aural. Moreover, by using the term noise, I accentuate the disturbing, destabilizing boundary-challenging energy which in Lynch's work creates a sense of eruption and disruption. Just like the fragment, visual noise is an aesthetic means to create what I have regarded as a constant and ubiquitous undercurrent to the ordering of systems and a constant challenging our habits of perceiving and understanding the social world. This is what is so fascinating and disturbing with Lynch's work—and what makes it an important voice in our time.

By blurring boundaries on all levels, by working against narrative and visual clarity and distinctness, by creating mysterious affective worlds and atmospheres, David Lynch's work emits an immense power. The many different blurrings of boundaries speak to the contemporary condition, undoubtedly, often in a sombre tone. But the dark rendering of fear and violence is refuted by means of the extremely forceful visual, auditive and audio-visual imageries that created the very same fear and violence. David Lynch's work taps into contemporary agonies and fears, and many fragments fit in with Christine Ross' characteristic of the precariousness of visuality in contemporary culture. However, Ross also proposes that "precariousness has a productive side to it: what perception lacks in opticality, it gains in complexity" (2008: 8). This "complexity" is, as I see it, an oppositional force (cf. Joseph Nechvatal's argument about noise as an oppositional aesthetic practice) that disturbs order and sabotages harmony. What furthermore makes David Lynch's work so powerful is, in my opinion, that it is at once so carefully and authoritatively crafted and the many worlds so imaginatively and creatively thought out as renderings of the unfamiliar or unknown, at the same time as it makes room for the viewers to experience and understand the works in their own terms.

What I am aiming at is that in Lynch's audio-visual world of blurred boundaries and affective atmospheres, there is a strong oppositional

power which scrutinises the dark side of contemporary life and does not leave the viewer at peace. Lynch's work never offers easy solutions and safe spaces. It challenges the well-known again and again. It provokes the secure and our routine ways of seeing, hearing and understanding.

The power of Lynch's blurred boundaries is that they oppose the straight-out familiar, the habitual and the customary. There is no safety net in a Lynch world, often no bottom, no assurance of a direct return ticket and no security as to where he is taking us. But in addition, there is a strange, multi-sensuous energy emanating from all his projects and all his worlds, which has a positive, even transgressive, value in itself. The Lynchian energy, formed aesthetically in many different ways, touches on our bodies. It does not leave us alone but forces us out of our habits to think and do differently. It affects us some way or other, and it leaves it up to us to ponder and decide how to use this energy in the best possible way.

Notes

Chapter 1

1. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/6412525.stm

Chapter 2

1. The very first exhibition of Lynch's non-cinematic works in Europe opened in Valencia in 1992. Here paintings, drawings and photographs were exhibited. Kristine McKenna provided an interview with Lynch for the catalogue (McKenna 1992), which also included two scholarly articles.

2. Conversation with the director of collections at the Fondation Cartier on January 25, 2020. Grazia Quaroni moreover claimed that "the idea of the exhibition was not to make a painter out of a film-maker".

3. The description of the exhibition is based on extended notes from my 2007 visits as well as from a large collection of reviews, short videos (uploaded to YouTube) and a conversation with curator Hélène Kelmachter, who co-curated the exhibition, on January 22, 2020. The description of Nouvel's building comes from the architect Jean Nouvel himself in Conway Lloyd Morgan's *Jean Nouvel: The Elements of Architecture* (1998) and the introduction to Richard Martin's *The Architecture of David Lynch* (2014). I have also benefitted from conversations with Danish architects Peter Jørgensen and Elin Skammelsen and photographs taken by MA student Asta Neimann.

4. David Lynch has himself said that at the trigger stations "you can introduce new sound into the continuing bed" (in a Fondation Cartier-produced trailer for the exhibition, retrieved at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbb4kQECB0Y).

I note his choice of the word "introduce", which stresses the participatory element in the exhibition.

5. Juan Vicente Aliaga (1992) observes in his article about the paintings that this was a technique used in writing anonymous messages, death threats and so on.

6. *House* and *House Burning with Dead Man* have no date (see *The Air is on Fire* catalogue pages 243 and 244), but they may be from the beginning of the 2000s like the dated water colour *Rain*. The series of

houses are continued in the following years (see, for example, the catalogue to *The Unified Field* exhibition, The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, 2014).

The thinly contoured houses also appear in Lynch's lithographs made after the exhibition, for example in *Magic Man Outside My House* (2008) and *House of Electricity* (2008). However, the fragile contours in the latter are almost hidden behind the outburst of electricity from the house or a large hand in *Shadow of a Twisted Hand Across My House* (1988). Fire bursts from the house in other paintings and emphasizes the fragility of the house.

7. Groys and Ujica (2007) relates the red square and the telephone number to Russian avant-gardist Kazimir Malevich's painting *Red Square: Painterly Realism of a Peasant Woman in Two Dimensions* from 1915.

8. When McKenna, in their conversation that opens the catalogue, mentions that she sees Kandinsky in the drawings, Lynch merely responds: "I don't know. I got into sort of cosmic explosions and shapes in the cosmos. I don't know any more than that" (Lynch in Mckenna 2007: 25). Interestingly, this chaotically floating cosmic chaos refers forward to the chaotic powerful forms, the red pointed lines and the rocks from the universe the camera traverses by the end of the White Sands atomic bomb explosion in *Twin Peaks: The Return*'s eighth episode (see Chap. 7).

9. Lynch once said in an interview (Barnes 2014) about curtains: "I don't know where it came from, but I love curtains. There is something so incredibly cosmically magical about curtains opening and revealing a new world."

10. In McKenna's interview with Lynch in the catalogue to the Valencia Exhibition (McKenna 1992), McKenna says: "I also notice that the surfaces of your paintings are becoming increasingly modelled and sculptural; was it a conscious decision to take the work in this direction?" Lynch answers: "Yes—I'd like to build them out even more. The idea of paint on a flat surface doesn't excite me so much right now. I like the idea of a field where someone's dumped some garbage—the garbage puffs up higher than the surface of the field, and I like that" (Lynch in McKenna 1992: 26).

11. Impressive exhibition catalogues containing reproductions of works, scholarly articles and often interviews with Lynch have accompanied all major Lynch exhibitions (*The Air is On Fire* 2007, Fondation Cartier; *Dark Splendor* , 2009, The Max Ernst Museum Brühl; *David Lynch: The Unified Field*, 2014, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; *Between Two Worlds*, GOMA Brisbane, 2015, David *Lynch: Someone is in my House*, 2018, Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht). However, notwithstanding the quality of reproductions, it is difficult to transfer to paper the plurality of details and the sculptural effects that characterize Lynch's large paintings. Just one example: it is almost impossible to see how the black lump in *Rock With Seven Eyes* (1996) protrudes from the canvas as a threatening, destructive object, and similarly the uncanny impression provided by the seven staring shining glass eyes and the shining black matter that the painting's title calls a rock.

The same difficulty in reproducing the sculptural effect in photography goes for the major work *Mister Redman* (2000). Catalogue reproductions make it difficult to grasp the extent of the three-dimensional multimediality that characterizes this painting. It is difficult to see that the curtain to the right stands out from the canvas, that the red lines on the creature's body are not painted but sculpted, that there are actual dices glued to the "man's" torso, that real matches are glued to the lower right part of the canvas, that pieces of Band-Aid are plastered to the left of Redman's left leg. In short, it is difficult to see all the different kinds of everyday material that have been attached to the canvas everywhere, the messy surface, the rough strokes and the thick layers of paint.

12. A lot has been written about Lynch's inspiration from painters like Wassily Kandinsky, Edward Hopper, Jackson Pollock and especially Francis Bacon (for example, Nochimson 1997, Hainge 1991, Olson 2008 *in passim*, Lombardo 2014). In their conversation about Lynch's films and paintings in the catalogue to *The Air is on Fire*, film-maker Andrei Ujica and art historian and philosopher Boris Groys argue that Kandinsky was important to Lynch not least "because of the dark danger that emanates from his paintings" (Ujica and Groys 2007: 109). On the other hand, not much has been written about Lynch's paintings outside of exhibition catalogues. Even in catalogues, articles about the

paintings are an exception, one of these being Werner Spies's article "Dark Splendor—David the Painter" in the *Dark Splendor* exhibition catalogue (2010).

However, Martha Nochimson offers an illuminating discussion on the painting *So This is Love* from 1992 in the context of Lynch's painterly inspirations (Nochimson 1997: 21–36). No exhibition catalogue or articles discuss the exhibitions as works in themselves; this chapter compensates for this shortage in the scholarly Lynch literature.

13. A larger sample of the lamps were on display at the *My Head is Disconnected* exhibition in Manchester 2019. Recalling art historian Ina Blom's claim that "the lamp is above all a creator of atmospheres or a distributor of ambiences" (2007: 65), Lynch's interest in making lamps makes sense. The short documentary *Lamp* (2003) shows Lynch working on a lamp.

14. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbb4kQECB0Y. The sonic "fabric" created for this space thus included recurrent sounds from the Lynchian sound library, importantly the wind and footsteps. Martha Nochimson suggests the term ""language of the wind"" for this significant part of Lynch's signature soundscape. Nochimson is occupied with "air" as the "pleasurable presence" of what is "out there" (1997: 36) and designates this windy sound "a visual evocation of free energy" (ibid.). However, air and energy, atmospheric "acceleration of air" (ibid.: 64), comes in many different shapes in Lynch, including fire, the colour red, blackness and eruptions of matter.

15. The first drawing for what should end up as the installation in 2007 is from 1977; it is titled *Interior With Cloud Wallpaper* (see *David Lynch: Someone is in my House* exhibition catalogue p. 73). According to Lynch (in Lynch and McKenna 2018: 462), the drawing was similar to many earlier drawings. However, this one was made when he was working on the exhibition, and Hervé Chandès suggested that they built the installation. There is a pencil on paper drawing *Family* from 1974 (*The Unified Field* exhibition catalogue plate 35), in which one finds similar exits to those in the installation. The room in this drawing includes a tiny family of human-animal-like persons who seem much too small for the room. The drawing also has curtains that make the room look like a stage decoration, which we look in on. Thus, it points

forward to the Rabbit shorts (2002). It also calls to mind Dorothy's claustrophobic living room in *Blue Velvet*, which Michel Chion (2006) argued was conceived as a stage set because of the frontal filming of the room.

16. In an installational exhibition called *The Inhabitants* curated by the Argentine painter Guillermo Kuitca, which honoured the 30th anniversary of the Fondation Cartier in 2014, Kuitca made a new version of Lynch's sitting room installation. He "revisited David Lynch's living room" (Thackara 2014) and painted on top of a remake of Lynch's original installation in a different, larger scale. The black and white furniture was there, but the walls were painted red in the way Kuitca had worked with cubist network patterns on murals. A colour version of one of the drawings Lynch had made of the room long before the 2007 exhibition was hanging on the wall, and so was the Lynch painting *Sun is Gone* from 2014, commissioned by the foundation for the exhibition. The painting shows some of Lynch's familiar tropes, a house on fire, a tree, a black monolith, words and a primitively drawn male figure.

However, the gold-framed *Sun is Gone* is actually a composite work, as it is painted on top of Kuitca's red wall. This rewriting or writing on top of an existing work is not an entire overwriting, though. Rather, it is a palimpsestic work in which different layers are visible at one and the same time. I will return to the palimpsest in more detail in the next chapter.

Kuitca's work is a beautiful example of not only artistic collaboration but also the reworking of the *The Air is on Fire* exhibition —just like Lynch has a habit of reworking his own works. Finally, contributing to the atmosphere in Kuitca's installation was Patti Smith's voice reading aloud a text by David Lynch from a concert the two artists had given together at the foundation in 2011. For the description of the *Inhabitants* installation, see https://www.facebook.com/Lynchland/photos/david-lynch-guillermo-kuitca-the-inhabitantssun-is-gone-david-lynchs-painting-wh/824954240904138/

17. The collaboration with Louboutin resulted in a joint exhibition titled *Fetish* later in 2007 in Paris (and in Moscow in 2009). Lynch provided signed photographs of naked women, lounging and wearing impossible-to-walk-in shoes, which were displayed alongside

Louboutin's shoes. In contrast to the blurry *Nude* photos in the exhibition, I find it hard to see anything but objectification of the female body in these photographs. The Lynch-Louboutin collaboration continued in 2014, when Lynch made an ad for Louboutin's red nail polish—an atypical Lynch work on account of its mix of whiteness and red.

18. Many of these photographs are published in *David Lynch: The Factory Photographs* from 2014, in which editor Paula Giloy-Hirtz writes: "No people whatsoever, anywhere. Nobody lives here. And yet these photographs are about people" (2014: 26). By contrast, in *The Elephant Man*'s imagery of late ninteenth-century factories, there are shots of workers performing mechanical movements in the underground, below the city.

19. Also published as the book *Snowmen* by the Fondation Cartier in 2007.

20. The photographs are also published by the Fondation Cartier in the book *Nudes* (2017). The book was presented together with a 17-minute weird short called *What Did Jack Do ?* produced for the Fondation Cartier in 2016. *What Did Jack Do ?* was uploaded to Netflix on David Lynch's 74th birthday in January 2020. The black and white short shows a speaking monkey (digitally manipulated with a human mouth) being interrogated by a detective (David Lynch) about a murder.

21. For a discussion on impurity and cinema studies, see Nagib and Jerslev 2014.

22. The paragraphs in this section that discuss Lynch's painting appeared in a different version in my article "The post-perspectival: screens and time in David Lynch's *Inland Empire* " (Jerslev 2012).

23. In a short description of this painting in the written material to the *Someone is in my House* exhibition at the Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht in 2018, Kristine McKenna describes the place where a man is being shot in this way: "The incident occurs in the empty lobby of an office building and we know we're indoors, yet the man casts a shadow that suggests a sun beating down overhead. These sorts of impossible combinations happen in dreams, and they make perfect sense there." I don't see it this way. I see the man standing in front of a roofed entrance, right between the roof and the entrance, which slightly

resembles one of Lynch's photographs of abandoned buildings (printed in *The Air is on Fire* catalogue p. 328). Moreover, as my discussion of the quasi-participatory work-viewer relation indicates, I do not regard this painting as particularly anchored in a dream world but exuding a claim to reality, both by way of theme—contemporary violence—and by way of the inclusion of the viewer in a here-and-now moment.

24. Two more drawings in the exhibition, made on notebook paper, are "shootings" (*The Air is on Fire* catalogue pages 116 and 117). These drawings show the blood flowing in abundance from figures that are almost floating on the black background. The drawing on page 117 in particular shows the expressive open mouth as the site of pain and agony.

25. These works are reprinted in the catalogue to *The Unified Field* exhibition (eds. Robert Cozzolini and Alethea Rockwell, 2014), pp. 77–79.

26. Billy is a recurrent figure in Lynch's paintings, just like BOB. Billy is referred to as Audrey's lover in *Twin Peaks: The Return* and BOB is well known from *Twin Peaks* and *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me.* Lynch has expressed—symptomatic of his refusal to create connections across his entire work, that the BOB of his painting is not the BOB of *Twin Peaks* (for example, in the fine conversation with Michel Chion at the Fondation Cartier in connection with *The Air is on Fire*, which is added to the extra material on the *Inland Empire* DVD).

For the sake of chronology: a text to this interview says that Chion published the first book about Lynch in 1992. Actually, my book (David Lynch i vore øjne [David Lynch in our eyes], 192 pages) was published in 1991—however, in Danish. It was translated into German by Lise Smidth in 1995 and published by Passagen Verlag under the title *David Lynch—Mentale Landschaften.*

27. Vomiting is a recurrent theme in Lynch's early works reminiscent of Francis Bacon (see, for example, *The Air is on Fire* catalogue pp. 119–121).

28. The Chris Burden "Shoot" November 19, 1971 clip is retrieved at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwh-XMFMp8U

29. The blurring of boundaries between media forms is also observed by Robert Martin (2014) in his book about David Lynch's architecture. He writes about the Club Silencio in *Mulholland Drive* and

the Red Room in *Twin Peaks* that they "feel like works of installation art inserted into the framework of a film" (2014: 136).

30. There was no lithography in the *Air is on Fire* exhibition. Lynch first became interested in lithographic printing during the time of the preparation of the Paris exhibition. Hervé Chandès, the director of the Fondation Cartier, called Lynch's attention to the fine-art printing studio *Idem*, which offered him the opportunity to work there. Lynch's beautiful eight-minute b/w short *Idem Paris* (2012) is an almost wordless, caressing document of the printing process and the old presses in close-ups. The film is aesthetically indebted to his photographs of factories and machinery. The sound, which besides some indistinct background voices consists of noise from machines and work instruments, is mixed by Dean Hurley. *Idem Paris* is a homage to "my home away from home" as Lynch says in *Room to Dream* (Lynch and McKenna 2018: 462). See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_VKCjeMzhg. For photographs of Lynch's own work on *Idem* see http://www.typeroom.eu/article/when-david-lynch-fell-love-lithography-idem-paris (see also Lynch and McKenna 2018: 444).

31. Despite my emphasis on the interactive possibilities and the exhibition's limitlessness by way of being embedded in the whole Lynch world as well as the transparent exhibition room, there is a huge difference between the installational exhibition *The Air is on Fire* and what Bishop (2012) has called the "performative exhibition". Her definition of the performative exhibition not only includes a much more radical understanding of the upheaval of the relationship between audiences, works and artist(s), it also deconstructs the very idea of an exhibition as having a designated starting and ending date.

32. The *Air is on Fire* is evidently not an installation, even though it accords with Anne Ring Petersen's terms. In contrast to Olafur Eliasson's installation *Weather Project* (exhibited at the Tate Modern in London in the winter of 2003–2004), which only comes into being through the visitors (see Petersen 2015: 38–42), *The Air is on Fire* would be an *exhibition* even without people. The contributing visitors turn it into an *installational exhibition*.

33. The first chapter of *Atmospheric Architectures* (2018 [2013]) was published in 1993 in *Thesis Eleven* 36, pp. 113–126 (Böhme 2013). Originally it was given as a lecture in 1991. Chapters and sections in

Atmospheric Architectures are similar to chapters in *The Aesthetics of Atmospheres* (2017); the chapters were published in German in different volumes in 2013.

34. As early as the beginning of the 1970s, marketing researcher Philip Kotler used the concept "atmospherics" in a spatial context. He argued for the use of the term in the context of commodification "to describe the conscious designing of space to create certain effects in buyers" (Kotler 1973–74: 50). Böhme, for his part, talks of the "scenic value of commodities" (2018 [2013]: 33), how scenic atmospheres are everywhere and how "[t]he atmospheric is part of life and staging serves its intensification" (ibid.: 34).

35. Bille (2019) discusses atmosphere in this cultural-specific way in his article about cosiness (in Danish, *hygge*).

36. Lynch has continued to work with making his paintings move. The music video to the song "I Have a Radio" from his first album *Crazy Clown Time* (2011), uploaded to his YouTube site in July 2020, seems like a repetition in black and white of one of his dark watercolours. The same goes for the approximately 10 minutes black and white short *Fire (POZAR)* (with music by Marek Zebrowski for the Penderecki String Quartet). It was made in 2015 but presented on the David Lynch Theater YouTube site in 2020. In *Fire*, his well-known childlike representations of fire are animated (I return to *I Have a Radio* in Chap. 5).

37. According to curator Hélène Kelmachter, David Lynch wanted to create a world the visitors could enter and into which they could make their individual tour (conversation with Hélène Kelmachter, 22 January, 2020).

38. After this follows the famous camera movement below the ground into the beetle inferno and we are reminded of the following—often quoted—Lynch's statement: "There is goodness in blue skies and flowers, but another force—a wild pain and decay—also accompanies everything" (in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 8).

39. For a description of the house (owned by Lynch himself) and the interior decoration, see Nieland (2012), the chapter "Furniture Porn", and Martin (2014, Chap. 3, "Home").

40. In a similar way the Beautiful Girl Across the Hall emanates from the blackness, as Henry opens the door to the dark corridor in

Eraserhead .

41. Nochimson (2013: 228–229) writes about the blackness in the house and refers to Steven Pizzello who quotes the film's cinematographer Peter Deming about the making of the light, the brownish colour in the house and the specific kind of "murky blackness" Lynch aimed at: "He wanted this particular hallway to be a slightly brownish black that would swallow characters up" (Pizzello 2009: 176). Pizzello's article offers a comprehensive view of the work on the mise en scène of the Madison house.

42. This materializing of bodies from what philosopher Sander H. Lee (2011) has called "seductive" darkness, a darkness that acquires an almost tangible opacity, is also perceptible in *Blue Velvet* and *Inland Empire* . After we have heard a female voice off screen ask Jeffrey, who leaves Sgt Williams's house in the evening, whether he was the boy who found the ear, the screen stays dark for a little while before Jeffrey's girlfriend-to-be Sandy, played by Laura Dern, slowly materializes out of the dark. So does Laura Dern's character(s) in *Inland Empire* , in which she, as Greg Hainge puts it in his excellent discussion on the film, "doesn't just step into shadows; she merges with them, bleeds into them" (Hainge 2012: 197).

Chapter 3

1. It was at the same time Lynch was experimenting with attaching small animals to his paintings—for example, the painting *Rat, Meat, Bird* in the middle of which a piece of raw meat is alive with dozens of small ants (for an image of the painting see https://www.facebook.com/Lynchland/photos/david-lynch-guillermo-kuitca-the-inhabitantssun-is-gone-david-lynchs-painting-wh/824954240904138/

Lynch talks about the *Rat, Meat, Bird* painting in the documentary *Pretty as a Picture: The Art of David Lynch* from 1997. Here he states: "I like the organic textures of it."

Included in the first part of this chapter is an elaboration on the section "Texture" in Jerslev 1997.

2. The 57-minute documentary is called *Don't Look at Me*. It was shot in December 1989 and released as a co-production between Channel 4 and Sept Art/Art Production, directed by Guy Girard. It starts with Lynch talking about different kinds of textures.

See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOCwBjN_lnw (Portuguese subtitles).

3. Lynch also refers to his use of words and letters in his paintings as textures: "A word is also a texture" (in Rodley 2005 [1997]: 22), meaning that words not only signify but have a materiality of their own that contributes to the overall feeling and appearance of a painting (see also Chap. 2).

4. Another example of texture in *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me*, is the ultra-close-up of Teresa Banks's nail being lifted from the tip of her finger.

5. One more example of conspicuous texture should be mentioned: the 52-second *Premonitions Following an Evil Deed*, which was part of the *Lumière et Compagnie* project in 1995, in which 40 directors each made a short film with Lumière's original Cinematograph. Not only was Lynch's film full of white smoke, which in itself created a textured surface, but the materiality of the film stock, the uneven exposure of the image and the manually produced speed of motion also conferred upon the images a kind of tactile filter that emphasized surface and filmic materiality. The same applies, albeit produced digitally, to the introduction to the different Lynch works on the *David Lynch Theater* YouTube channel. The black and white animated cinema theatre appears as if it were filmed by the same analogue Lumière camera and makes the same flickering analogue images. When the camera zooms in on the theatre's screen, the image turns into a greyish flickering texture.

6. "ein Kampf mit der Wirklichkeit, eine Abwendung und eine Hinwendung Zugleich" […] "Das Bild befreit sich vom Diktat der Welt-Spiegelung".

7. Es ist mehr as das, was es abbildet. Eine reine Abbildung von Mass ["measure"] […] und eine reine Empfindung von Körperlichkeit"

8. In the catalogue to the *David Lynch: Someone is in My House* exhibition, pp. 166–167.

9. The black monolith is a recurrent form in Lynch's visual vocabulary. *Rock with Seven Eyes* which I mentioned in Chap. 2 is another example of a massive black lump. In Lynch's work, the form goes back to the compact pile of dirt on Henry's bedside table in *Eraserhead* and the strange iceberg on the desk at the police station in *Blue Velvet* , over the lithograph *Oh, I Have Made a Mess* from 2009

(plate 91 on page 119 in the *Unified Field* catalogue), and the pile of dirt with Laura's necklace on top of it which Cooper and Truman find in the train wagon where Laura and Ronette Pulaski were deadly assaulted (*Twin Peaks* pilot episode) to the rock, on which Richard Horne climbs in the dark in order to locate a spot set by coordinates at the request of Bad Cooper in *Twin Peaks: The Return* Episode 16.

10. In both Olson's and Nieland's writing, abstraction in Lynch's use of the term also covers non-realistic symbolic condensations.

11. Lynch responded in a similar way to McKenna in 2007 in their talk about decay, which Lynch found beautiful. McKenna replied that people are perceived as horrible when they decay. To this Lynch answered: "Well because, like I say, when you *name* the thing, that's when the problems start. If you just saw a close-up of something you'd say, 'Oh my God, that's so beautiful. What is that?' And you'd say, 'that's a decaying body of a 97-year-old woman', and then you'd have another thought. But alone it could be … unnamed, it could be very beautiful" (McKenna 2007: 35) (see also the second introductory quote to this chapter).

12. Asked by Chris Rodley about the smoke in his early colour nude photographs, Lynch answered: "Smoke obscures things. And it's another texture" (Rodley 2005 [1997]: 219).

13. Just a couple of the sharp colour photographs offer a stereotypical image of a woman's leg in high-heeled shoes, which resembles the fetichizing photos Lynch made in collaboration with Christian Louboutin, I mentioned in the last chapter.

14. Grønstad suggests four different kinds of aesthetic opacity, (1) an aesthetics of the "materially damaged", (2) "artistic works whose properties are deliberately inscrutable, informationally sparse, or contentless", (3) "visual representations that have been vandalized and exposed to acts of iconoclasm", and finally (4) what he calls "narrative forms of opacity" (2020: 22–23). The mentioned photographic examples belong to Grønstad's second category. Later in his book Grønstad discusses a couple of examples of narrative opacity in Lynch.

15. This remark brings to mind Lynch's spectacular live stage production *Industrial Symphony No. 1* which was recorded on video and came out in 1990. By means of recurrent double exposures, a veiled space was created in which Julee Cruise performed songs from *Floating*

Into the Night (composed and written by David Lynch and Angelo Badalamenti). Cruise was mostly floating in the air in a light organza-like dress over a dark, unlimited, almost gravity defying space which resembled an old factory building made up of smoke, fire-red light, stroboscopic light, strong torchlight, large gigantic pipes, iron scaffolding, a large tank-like construction, an old car. The stage sound included noise reminiscent of screams and sirens (see also Jerslev 1995 [1991]).

16. The factory photographs are taken in a range of places (England, Germany, Poland, the US). Information about location is not always provided in diverse publications. In that sense, they appear as abstractions .

17. This is also commented on by Lynch in *Room to Dream*: "It was before graffiti" (Lynch and McKenna 2019: 136).

18. Similar observations are expressed by Lynch in a segment in the *Lynch (One)* documentary (2007), in which he talks about moods while wandering around photographing in deserted factory areas in Poland. In addition, the bonus feature *Lodz* on the *Lynch (One)* DVD compiles a range of his photographs of textured industrial buildings.

19. An example of the differences could be the Bechers' photograph *Pipe Detail: Coal Mine* (1991) compared with Lynch's industrial photography reproduced in Rodley 2005 [1997], in the lower part of page 111. In the Bechers' sharp photo, the medium close-up captures the pipe as an industrial form, whereas in Lynch's darker close-up, the rusty flakes on the iron pipe and the handle seem to blend with the floor and create an atmosphere of bygone work. For an excellent introduction to Bernd and Hilla Becher's photography and method, see art historian Blake Stimson's Tate Paper "The Photographic Comportment of Bernd and Hilla Becher" (Stimson 2006).

20. In an interview, from 1999, Lynch referred to *The Straight Story* as "simple direct, straight" and not as "experimental". He added, though: "One that doesn't prevent a director from introducing subtleties [...] For me, the question was: How can I weave these elements together to create a beautiful little tapestry, a tapestry-poem?" (Henry 1999: 214).

21. Sarah Dillon is a lecturer in English and film. Her point of departure is literature and in particular the nineteenth-century English writer Thomas de Quincey. It is from de Quincey she borrows the term

“involuted” to describe this process of entanglement and interweaving. However, her rich texts are also about palimpsestic readings in other fields like queer readings and postcolonial readings.

22. An example of the palimpsest is Walker Evans’s powerful black and white photograph *Torn Movie Poster* from 1930, which shows a drawing in ultra-close-up of a man and a woman looking up to their left. The woman’s cropped face with her wide-open, frightened eyes occupies the lower right part, and the man, his face cropped to show only his left eye and half of his nose and mouth, occupies the upper left part. Moreover, one can see the letters S and A above the man. This photograph was used on the poster for the Walker Evans exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the spring of 2000 (apparently there is another version of the photograph that is less drastically cropped). What is interesting in the context of my discussion is first the textured surface: the clear creases in the paper because the poster is not hanging completely smooth on the foundation. Second and most importantly, the palimpsestuous surface that shows in the crevices in the poster, which make the many layers of paper, other posters that have hung on the wall before and even the concrete wall itself emerge side by side. Moreover, a crack in the poster runs like a dark current down the woman’s chin, as if she has been torn by a knife, and the crack in the paper predicts the result of the threat that apparently causes the terror in the woman’s eye. Hence, the photograph shows exactly how layers are “interrupting and inhabiting each other”.

23. I have, for example, written about theories about the face and the close-up in relation to Norwegian film director Joachim Trier’s films and in particular the close-up of Isabelle Huppert’s face in *Louder Than Bombs* from 2015 (Jerslev 2018).

24. Coulson said in an interview with Andreas Halskov (the interview was conducted on March 2, 2015 according to a conversation I had with Andreas Halskov): “David was trying to help people with the puzzle. The show was brought to Bravo, an art channel over here, and they scored a real coup by getting it. David asked them whether he could make some introductions, and he was in Wisconsin where there’s a lot of wood, and he wrote them really quickly. I got the scripts, and they built a little set with a fireplace, and we shot them all in one day. […] They were meant to help people with the puzzle, but, as is typical of

David, they were also strange and puzzling" (retrieved from https://detroederum.wordpress.com/boger/tv-peaks/catherine-e-coulson/). The introductions are also included in the *Twin Peaks Definitive Golden Box Edition* DVD.

25. The burning of the convenience store is reminiscent of the burning house in *Lost Highway* , which again reminds us of the exploding house in Robert Aldrich's film noir *Kiss Me Deadly* from 1955 (Jerslev 2004; Lucas 1998).

26. Episode 17 likewise paid tribute to Jack Nance, who died in late December, 1996. The end of the episode's credit sequence reads "In memory of Jack Nance". The episode reuses a short sequence from the opening of *Twin Peaks*'s pilot episode, in which Jack Nance as Pete Martell goes fishing. However, in contrast to the *Twin Peaks* opening episode, there is no corpse wrapped in plastic on the pebbles and Pete actually goes fishing. It appears as if Dale Cooper (imagined that he) had actually saved Laura, before she was killed by her father/Bob. However, this radical upheaval of time in the series should at least be contested by the sentence that is pronounced a couple of times in *Inland Empire* about "actions" having "consequences".

27. It is tempting to refer to the luxury cruisers filled with Covid19 infected passengers, which, during the first month of the coronavirus pandemic in the spring of 2020, were refused permission to dock in ports.

28. Martin (2014) and Ujica and Groys (2007) have also discussed Lynch's worlds as heterotopias. In his book about Lynchian architectures, Richard Martin suggests that it is "tempting to label all Lynch's cinematic worlds as heterotopias" (Martin 2014: 137). In a similar vein, Andrei Ujica and Boris Groys suggest that Lynch's space is a heterotopian space, a space that looks familiar, a kind of American reality, yet a space that is fundamentally unfamiliar, "which prompts in the spectator a feeling of having been displaced to a different, parallel space" (2007: 381). One problem with this general take on Lynch and heterotopia is that the heterotopia in Foucault is related to spaces that are not heterotopias. There is always a site that co-defines the heterotopian counter-site. My own use of the term in discussing *Twin Peaks: The Return* could be criticized for the same. I claim that there is nothing outside the different heterotopias in the series.

Chapter 4

1. Lynch's long-time Director of Photography, Peter Deming, commented in an interview in 2017 about the production idea for *Inland Empire* : "David went digital before anybody, at least in his mind, and he shot 'Inland Empire' [the one project in which Lynch served as his own DP] with a digital camera. He and I would disagree on the quality of [that camera], but he became very enamoured with becoming a small self-contained unit and the sort of do-it-yourself situation" (O'Falt 2017—square brackets in original).

2. Kristine McKenna and David Lynch do not mention the *Interview Project* in *Room to Dream*. They may have decided that this is not a Lynch project. However, since Lynch is the host of this great site, which originally was presented by davidlynch.com, I include it in this chapter about Lynch and the digital.

3. Webby Awards are "Honouring the Best of the Internet", "in seven major media types: websites, video, advertising, media & PR, social, apps, mobile, and voice, games, and podcasts" (https://www.webbyawards.com/). On May 4, 2010 the *Interview Project*'s facebook page announced: "It's official! *Interview Project* won both the People's Voice Award and the Webby Award for best documentary series at this year's Webby Awards! Thank you for taking the time to vote for *Interview Project* and we hope that you continue to enjoy the rest of the series!"

https://www.facebook.com/85939697803/posts/its-official-interview-project-won-both-the-peoples-voice-award-and-the-webby-aw/119286618099987/.

4. Lynch's aversion to digital technology is not only related to film. For example, he says in *Room to Dream* about the printing of lithography at the Idem Paris printing house: "[B]ecause of piracy, digital images become cheaper and cheaper, and they're easy to steal and share. A lithograph is something you can *have*, though, and when you have it you see the beauty of the paper and you smell the ink. It's so different from a digital image" (Lynch and McKenna 2018: 462).

5. Some of the experiments are available on the DVD *Dynamic : 01: The best of davidlynch.com* (Absurda 2006)—I'll return to them in the next chapter. The animated shorts *Dumbland* were collected on the DVD *Dumbland* (Absurda 2005).

6. As for the website davidlynch.com, see McKenna 2018: 411–415; Mactaggart 2010: 152–153. Lynch ends several of the short films in which he talks about what he is working on by wishing viewers "a great day" or a "great one" and urging people to send reports about what they are working on.

7. Allister Mactaggart also refers to this statement and contemplates that the Internet provides film-makers and others with a freedom that allows for more "experimental and avant-garde ways of working" (Mactaggart 2010: 152–153).

8. Since I started writing this book and finishing this chapter, the site has been closed down. Which is a big shame. Some of the short documentary portraits are uploaded to YouTube and the screen grabs from the site (illustrations 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) gives an impression of its affordances.

9. A less comprehensive *Interview Project* has been completed in Germany, also presented by David Lynch and directed by Austin Lynch and Jason S. This site does not exist anymore either, but some of the site's documentaries can be accessed on YouTube. Lynch's introduction to the site had German subtitles and the interviews were subtitled in English.

10. David Rodowick makes a similar point. He refers to Philippe Dubois for the argument that "while photographic indexicality designates and attests, it does not necessarily *signify*" (Rodowick 2007: 75).

11. This chapter is not about the complicated and intriguing relationship between the digital, the analogue and the indexical in film. So, I leave it here. For an interesting, comprehensive discussion on the digital index, see Rosen (2001). For a likewise interesting and comprehensive discussion on indexicality and contingency, see Doane (2002). For a discussion on indexicality and the trace, see Wahlberg (2008). Finally, for a discussion about André Bazin, see Rosen (2001) and Andrew (2010).

12. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VkFNH13E54&t=10s.

13. This documentary contributes an intimate portrait of the director while photographing old factories, finishing the *Wajunga Red Dog* painting and working on *Inland Empire* . The documentary is directed by the pseudonym blackANDwhite with money among others

from the Danish Film Institute—and a large group of Danes among the crew.

14. In the review Lim lamented that Lynch, “a onetime celluloid fetishist”, had now emerged as a “tireless proselytizer” of digital video. He expanded on the Internet metaphor in his book (Lim 2015: 173).

15. Goodwin (2014) claims that his thematic analysis of *Inland Empire* focuses on spectatorship and mediation. However, his analysis is less about mediation than it is about unravelling the story of Nikki Grace.

16. Shaviro refers in *Post-Cinematic Affect*, in the chapter about Richard Kelly’s *Southland Tales* (2007)—in which he has deleted the references to *Inland Empire* from the 2007 blog version of the chapter—to Lev Manovich’s description in *The Language of New Media* (2001) of a historical shift from *montage* to *composite* in cinematic form (Shaviro 2010: 77).

17. See also Steven Shaviro’s reading of *Southland Tales* along the same lines.

18. To follow up on the quote about *Lost Highway* and digitization at the beginning of the chapter: In David Lynch and Barry Gifford’s manuscript to the film (Lynch and Gifford 1997: 48–49) the transformation from Fred to Pete is described in the following manner:

> *Fred is still curled on the floor, but spasms begin to rock his body. He goes into convulsions, blood gushes from his nostrils. His head is badly swollen. Fred vomits repeatedly, and drags around in his mess. Fred turns, straining upwards as we’ve seen him do before. His face and head are hideously deformed.*
>
> *Fred brings his shaking, tortured hands to his forehead. He pulls his hand down across his face, squeezing it as it goes. As his hand passes over his face, Fred’s features are removed, leaving a blank, white mass with eye sockets.*
>
> *We move into the eye sockets and beyond.*
> […]
> *Fred’s blank face begins to contort and take on the appearance, feature by feature, of Pete Dayton.*

Fred Madison is becoming Pete Dayton

I find it quite evident that this description of an uncut metamorphosis of Fred into Pete is made with digital morphing in mind. Lynch constructed the transformation by other means—but the visual result was a much more diffuse and opaque transformation from human form to amorphous organic mass than described in the manuscript.

19. Many discussions about *Inland Empire* point out that the girl's mention of Pomona refers to Billy Wilder's *Sunset Boulevard*, one of Lynch's favourite films, which is referenced throughout his work (see, for example, Mactaggart 2010). It seems to me that the reference in this scene is merely self-referential.

20. Jennifer Pranolo (2011) offers a thought-provoking reflection on "holes" in *Inland Empire*: "A fleshy metonym for the various 'holes' in Inland Empire, Niko's 'hole' is the *Heim*-like womb that is a standard trope for the uncanny; it is the rabbit hole of time through which Dern slips; and it is the very real hole wreaked upon the female body by a sadistic sexual violence" (Pranolo 2011: 492—italics in original). Moreover, Mark Fisher (2016) argues in a short passage that a "dominant motif in the film is another kind of threshold: a hole" (2016: 57).

21. The rabbits were originally conceived for the website and are now uploaded to the David Lynch Theater YouTube page. Voices for the rabbits are by Naomi Watts, Laura Harring and Scott Coffey. The feeling of distorted scale may be because the voices of the three actors are not accompanied by the rabbits' mouths moving and moreover because of the somewhat stiff doll-like movements of the rabbits.

22. Lynch was also occupied with surveillance in *Lost Highway* , although not as thoroughly as in *Inland Empire*.

23. It should be noted, however, that *The Truman Show* is also an example of the thematic engagement with surveillance, even though it is about surveillance as real-time transmission and manipulation. Because of its ending, which collapses the diegetic and the enunciative level, *The Conversation* is actually much more refined than *The Truman Show*.

24. I refer here primarily to the image track, without going into all details in this immensely rich and complicated sequence. Hence, I do

not delve into Lynch's elaborate and refined use of sound and music.

25. Greg Hainge discusses this sequence in more length in his book *Noise Matters* (2012: 184–190). He is puzzled by the fact that the announcer's voice comes from the gramophone and not a radio, "a technology that is just as capable of producing static" (2012: 187). However, I guess it might be just as possible to regard the voice as coming from an off-screen radio and understand the familiar close-up of a scratching gramophone as being a greeting to the sound of analogue's media materiality.

26. Mactaggart draws our attention to the fact that "[t]here is a great deal of crying in Lynch's films" (2010: 49). In his interesting chapter on the function of tears in Lynch's films he points out that tears are one of the recurrent ways of creating excess. Tears often function merely as affective condensations—separated from the narrative by often coming too late or being in the frame too long (Mactaggart 2010: 59). The figure of the Lost Girl arose from one of Lynch's experiments, *The Darkened Room* (2002), in which a young blond girl sits crying and is being harassed by a dark-haired girl, hence referring, of course, to *Mulholland Drive*.

27. In her article about *Inland Empire* , Alanna Thain (2010) describes this manipulation of image speed as "non-agentic 'zapping'": "The TV screen becomes a medium that brings together separate scenes in a non-agentic "zapping" (the channels change and scenes of Visitor One's arrival and the rabbits play on fast-forward intercut with static, but she is not working the controls)" (Thain 2010: 96). Both Thain and I point out that the Lost Girl is not procuring the fast-forward. The TV screen therefore seems to blur boundaries between TV and monitor for the projection of (surveillance) images.

28. In her chapter about *Inland Empire* , Martha Nochimson (2013) regards the many different worlds in Lynch's film as thresholds or passages Nikki has to move through on her journey towards self-fulfilment. This journey ends with her shooting the villain, the so-called Phantom, whom we saw at the beginning of the film looking for "an opening"—much like Bob in *Twin Peaks*. Nochimson's reading accords with the many doors in the film, which Nikki continuously enters and exits. It also accords with the redemptive ending, in which doors suddenly open by themselves (the door to the rabbit stage, the door to

the Lost Girl's room and the door with the number 47 on it—referring to the original unfinished Polish film (*Vier Sieben*). As if the spell from the original film production had now been lifted.

Moreover, other people seem to be resurrected in the end credits scene, in which, for example, we see the prostitute "in her blond star wig" with her monkey as described by one of the homeless people in Nikki's dying scene. On this optimistic reading of the film, Nochimson agrees with Schaffner (2009), who objects to the understanding of Lynch as misogynistic and pronounces *Inland Empire* as feminist. Amy Taubin also argued (before Nochimson) that the film has "an uplifting Hollywood ending. Unlike Diane/Betty, Nikki doesn't succumb to her nightmares. Rather, she transcends them and reaches a higher level of consciousness" (Taubin 2007: 56), and Thain (2010: 93) sees the film ending in a "state of grace". Mactaggart, on the other hand, compares the story of the two female characters in *Inland Empire* and *Mulholland Drive* and comes to the conclusion that they, both living under oppressive conditions, "enter into new fantasies as a means of seeking to ameliorate the horror of their condition. However, in both cases, the fantasies cannot be sustained and they eventually fall apart" (2010: 154). In a similar fashion, Pranolo (2011) is more critical towards the description of Nikki, whose journey she sees as being an example of Lynch's more or less sadistic descriptions of women in trouble—in this film, even a "digitally remastered woman in trouble" (2011: 490)—who eternally returns suffering from the escalation of the film's "representational violence" (ibid.: 487). More recently, both Lindsay Hallam (2018) and Julie Grossman and Will Scheibel (2020) add to the discussion about women in Lynch's work and make convincing points about fighting and "strong yet damaged women" (Grossman and Scheibel 2020: 51) in *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* , *Twin Peaks* and *Twin Peaks: The Return*.

29. The first part of the fragment from *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* is repeated in Episode 14 in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, as Cole remembers more and more about it. Cole also remembers that Jeffries pointed at Cooper and said, "Who do you think that is there?" Cole only concludes that "this is really something interesting to think about" and leaves it to us to find out why it is.

Chapter 5

1. For more about Lynch's commercial work see Todd 2012, Chapter 6, Malkinson 2016 and Godwin 2017. Additionally, Odell and LeBlanc (2007) include a short description of Lynch's early production of commercials and music videos in their book.

2. An alternative to the glossy "original" black-and-white video directed by Herb Ritts and featuring Isaac and world-famous model Helena Christensen.

3. Nechvatal defines noise music as "varieties of avant-garde music and sound art that may use elements such as cacophony, dissonance, atonality, noise, indeterminacy and repetition in their realization" (2011: 37).

4. In an interview from 1979 produced for a TV course at UCLA, Lynch is talking more about this space, in which one, standing down there, "didn't know where you were". Retrieved at http://www.openculture.com/2015/11/a-young-david-lynch-talks-about-eraserhead-in-one-of-his-first-recorded-interviews-1979.html.

5. The original photo is not included in Petra Giloy-Hirtz' *The Factory Photography* (2014).

6. To be clear: I am not quoting the entirety of the voice-over in the following.

7. Lynch has actually worked with whiteness before, at the end of *Eraserhead* when Henry unites with the woman in the radiator and the film dissolves in a kind of white bliss. Lynch says in *Room to Dream*: "The final shot of Henry with the Lady in the Radiator is so beautiful because it just burned out white. Glowing" (Lynch and McKenna 2019: 127).

8. The interview can be retrieved at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87xf-r5BrIw.

9. See Todd 2012: 113–116 and Rodley 2005 [1997]: 211–212 for Lynch's remarks about his choice to make the Georgia Coffee commercials for the Japanese market. See a significant example of omitting to mention commercials in the catalogue to the *Someone is my house* exhibition at the Bonnefanten Museum (Huijts 2018a: 35). Summary of the Georgia Coffee TV commercials in Thorne (2016: 345–349).

10. Info from David Lynch Archivist Lynchland. Retrieved at https://www.facebook.com/Lynchland/photos/a.3104095502989989/3206521012747437.

11. In the aforementioned 2008 interview, Lynch was asked about product placement, and he replied to the great satisfaction of his audience: "[P]roduct placement in a film putrefies the environment". I might add, though, that there are a few significant close-ups in the short *Lamp* (2003) of a box of Duraskin rubber gloves, which Lynch wears when he is smoothing the surface of the lamp's "leg".

12. Apparently made by French designer Agnès b, who has also made tee shirts together with Lynch. *Purple* magazine published in 2011 an interview with Lynch about clothes (Israel 2011). Lynch also became involved with fashion and products in 2009 when he made 11 window displays for Galeries Lafayette in Paris. The theme was "Machines, Abstraction and Women". The windows displayed fantastic moving multimedia sound and image installations that featured merchandise from the department store in excessively luxurious and magical mobile tableaux. Simultaneously with the window displays, the Galerie des Galeries in Galeries Lafayette showed the Lynch exhibition *I See Myself*. Some of the window displays can be seen on YouTube. Some are also collected athttps://themidsummerproject.wordpress.com/2010/10/28/david-lynch-x-galeries-lafayette/.

13. BBC News March 2, 2007. Retrieved at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/6412525.stm (interview in connection with the opening of *The Air is on Fire*).

14. Cotillard featured in other Dior commercials launched on www.christiandior.com. These commercials are *Lady Noire* (Olivier Dahan 2009), *Lady Rouge* (Jonas Akerlund 2010), *L.A.dy Dior The Film* (John Cameron Mitchell 2011), *Lady Dior* (Peter Lindbergh 2016) and a collaboration between Dior, Cotillard and UK band Metronomy for Dior's 2014 "Enter the Game" campaign. Included in Dior's series of films starring Marion Cotillard is a two-minute documentary/ad *Lady Blue Shanghai—Behind the Scenes*, which, in a highly fashionable style, shows the shooting of Dior fashion photography modelling Cotillard (retrieved at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARyqZ1Bcr3c). As Berra (2012) remarks, Lynch is notably absent in the images.

15. *Someone is in my house* is the title of Lynch's latest larger exhibition, at the Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, Belgium, 2018.

16. Taking a reversed point of view, Berry and Copping both write about the added value for Dior of the Lynch brand.

17. Which again calls to mind *Industrial Symphony no. 1*, the live stage performance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music from 1989 (performed twice) which came out on video in 1990, directed by Lynch and with music and songs by Lynch and Angelo Badalamenti. Julee Cruise sings most of her songs suspended in air, but we also see her in ultra-close-ups on a monitor placed on the stage. The close-ups are not as blurry as in *Crazy Clown Time*, though and we see her both on the monitor and 'live' on stage, singing from the trunk of an old car.

18. The video is probably shot with a camera, which provides a HD quality and not the grainy textured quality of the PD-150 camera Lynch used for the other examples of visual noise I have brought to light in this chapter. The PD-150 texture is concentrated on the monitor which by way of technological characteristic stands out from the rest of the video.

19. In the only article that to my knowledge has been published about the music video, Timothy Holland (2016) discusses the term "fun" at length.

20. The Valencia 1992 exhibition also displayed an *I See Myself* painting, dated 1992. It is quite different, more sinister—made with rough strokes of paint on canvas. It also includes two figures, one a bit lighter than the other. The two figures are divided by a rough diagonal line. They have outstretched arms too, but their mouths are open and the face of the figure to the right seems ghost-like with large black eye holes in a face made white with cotton pasted on to the surface. The work's title is written along the vertical sides in cut-out capital letters, to the left as "I See Myself" and to the right "Myself I See" (see the catalogue to the exhibition *David Lynch*. Sala Parpalló. Diputación Provincial de Valencia, p. 147).

21. A final example of a painting made to move most literally is a short trailer for the Lynch exhibition *Between Two Worlds* in Brisbane in 2015. The large painting *Well I Can Dream ... Can't I*, in which a naked woman lies on a couch with a pink telephone beside her, is animated. The woman is talking to someone at the other end of the line, partly

about the exhibition (it sounds like Lynch is doing both voices). See https://welcometotwinpeaks.com/lynch/between-two-worlds-exhibition-australia/.

Chapter 6

1. Richard A. Barney's interview book from 2009, from which I quote in this chapter, comprises interviews from 1977 to 2008. Even though I reference the year of doing the interview it does not seem to me to make much difference as Lynch says more or less the same about ideas and fragments over the years. However, in the conversation with Martha Nochimson (printed as Appendix 1, Fragments IV and V in Nochimson 2013), he talks about "the unified field" which appeared in *Catching the Big Fish* (Lynch 2006) and was also the title of the large exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 2014 (see also Huijts 2018a).

2. This quote and the following printed in Justus Nieland's book from 2017 are originally from the 2007 interview with Lynch by Mike Figgis, published in *Sight and Sound*. Nieland ends his book with reprints of this interview and an early interview from 1997.

3. "Jede system wächst nur aus Fragmenten".

4. "Alle poetische Fragmente müssen irgendwo Theile eines ganzen sein".

5. Eric G. Wilson (2010) also connects David Lynch with Friedrich Schlegel, arguing that the irony in Lynch's images is similar to the Romantic irony Schlegel was famously propagating.

6. The three collections of fragments were published in Friedrich Schlegel's name but some of the *Athenäum* fragments were written by his brother August Wilhelm Schlegel, Friedrich Schleiermacher and Friedrich von Hardenberg, known as Novalis (who all participated in the Jena Group). They did not invent the fragment; the short form originates from French philosopher Nicolas Chamfort, whose *Maximes, penseés, caractères et anecdotes*, which he called "aphorisms", was published in German in 1795. The fragments were written over a short period, and later in his life, after he had converted to Catholicism in 1808, Schlegel dissociated himself from his earlier thinking. *Critical* fragments or *Lyceum* fragments (1797) are primarily fragments about literature, literary criticism and wit, whereas the larger collection of

Athenäum fragments (1798; named after the journal published by Friedrich Schlegel and his brother) cover a range of fields from politics to philosophy and literary theory. Moreover, the fragments concern irony and wit; the latter understood by Schlegel as a sudden intellectual idea. The third series, *Ideas* (1800), is regarded as the most incomprehensible; it deals primarily with theoretical reflections on religion (see, for example, Firchow 1971).

7. "Auch in der Poesie mag wohl alles Ganze halb, und alles Halbe doch eigentlig ganz sein".

8. "Die romantische Dichtart ist noch im Werden; ja das ist ihr eigentliches Wesen, dass sie ewig nur werden, nie vollendet sein kann".

9. "Auch das Grösste System ist doch nur rein Fragment".

10. "Ein Fragment muss gleich einem kleinen Kunstwerke von der ungebenden Welt ganz abgesondert und in sich selbst vollendet sein wie ein Igel".

11. I have used the English translation of the fragments by Peter Firchow, with some corrections. I have retained his translation of the German "Igel" in *Athenäum* fragment 206 as "porcupine" even though many other English language texts translate it as "hedgehog". The German fragment sounds like this: "Ein Fragment muss gleich einem kleienen Kunsterke von der umgebebenden Welt ganz abgesondert und in sich selbst vollendet sein wie ein Igel". Fragment 72 is translated by me, though. The original text goes like this: "Übersichten des Ganzen wie sie jetzt Mode sind, entstehen, wenn einer alles einzelne übersieht, und dann summiert" (Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe II: 175). Firchow's somewhat imprecise translation reads: "Surveys of entire subjects of the sort that are now fashionable are the result of somebody surveying the individual items, and then summarizing them." What Firchow's translation misses is the sarcasm in Schlegel's fragment but also the double meaning of the verb "übersiehen", which means both "ignore" and "survey". Thus, Firchow's translation does not include the fact that the fragment points at the part as well as the whole. All other translations of Schlegel from German to English are by me.

12. "Es ist nicht möglich, einen Teil für sich zu verstehen; d.h. es ist unverständig, ihn nur im einzelnen betrachten zu wollen. Das Ganze aber ist noch nicht abgeschlossen; und also bleibt alle Kenntnis dieser Art nur Annäherung und Stückwerk."

13. “Randglossen zu dem Text des Zeitalters”.

14. “Die Form der Fragmente is die reine Form des Classicität und Progressivität und Urbanität”.

15. All quotes in the following are from the Swedish text (Engdahl 1992 [1986], pp. 44–63). The translation into English is by me.

16. “Wer etwas Unendliches will, der weiss nicht was er will. Aber umkehren lässt sich dieser Satz nicht”.

17. By contrast, Sara Ahmed, another influential affect scholar, argues that there is no definite difference between affect and emotion (for example, Ahmed 2014 [2004]: 40).

18. See Brinkema 2014 for a polemical exchange with Massumi’s understanding of affect. Her main point is that affect has form and can be analysed as such.

19. A similar image to the photography of the broken window with a pointed part in the frame can be found in both *Eraserhead* and in Petra Giloy-Hirtz’ edited *David Lynch: The Factory Photographs*.

20. I have been inspired by Peter Brooks’s book in my discussion about *Wild at Heart* as “postmodern melodrama” (see Jerslev 1991 and 1995). Brooks says illuminatingly about the “text of muteness”: “The text of muteness is, then, pervasive in melodrama and central to the representation of its most important meanings. Gesture in all forms is a necessary complement and supplement to the word, tableau is a repeated device in the summary of meanings acted out, and the mute role is the virtuoso emblem of the possibilities of meaning engendered in the absence of words. If it is relatively easy to grasp the effect created by tableau, it is much more difficult to talk about how gesturality in general, and the exclusively gestural language of the mutes in particular, creates meaning” (Brooks 1985: 62).

21. For an interesting reflection upon the repeated close-ups of the radio without a hand touching it, see Davison (2004). Annette Davison asks whether the medium and the sound technology in itself are provided with an evil force in this scene.

22. I have written about Baudrillard and the desert in relation to *Lost Highway* (in Jerslev 2004). Just like in *Wild at Heart*, the desert and the darkness coalesce in *Lost Highway* into a space in which meaning dissolves.

23. This place is called the Mauve Zone, according to the index entry in Sanna (ed). 2019. See also https://twinpeaks.fandom.com/wiki/Purple_sea.

24. There is an additional part to this segment, which is more firmly embedded in the larger *Twin Peaks* universe. It has a clearer narrative function as it shows how Cooper is transported from one place to another and from one incarnation (the Cooper who was imprisoned in the Black Lodge's Red Room) to another (the paralysed Dougie Jones). Finally, this part also connects with *Twin Peaks* and *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* : a little below the cube comes slowly sliding Major Garland Briggs's head (reminiscent of Henry's floating face at the beginning of *Eraserhead*). It is immensely big, dark and ghostly, and it utters the words "Blue Rose" in a hollow dark tone of voice—which by referring back to the opening sequence in *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* prepares the ground for the future mystery to be investigated (the Blue Rose task force is explained by Albert and Cole to Tammy in Episode 12).

25. This is also the time shown on the clock on the wall at the Twin Peaks police station in the penultimate episode. It doesn't seem to be able to exceed this point in time—another plain example of the dissolution of continuous time, the making strange of space and the feelings of uncanniness that pervade the series.

26. While I chose to just name Laura Dern's different characters Nikki in Chap. 4, I use the designation Susan/Nikki here. In the short fragment, Laura Dern seems to be Susan but also imagine herself as Nikki Grace.

27. It is tempting to just draw attention to the similarity between the scene where the Lost Girl and her husband embrace and the scene by the end of *Wild at Heart* where Lula and Sailor embrace. In both scenes, one sees the image of the child (of approximately the same age) looking happily up at his parents. There is a similar scene in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, when Cooper says goodbye to his family and assures them that he will return. The boy is watching as his mother and Cooper embrace, but his figure is more blurred than in the other two scenes.

28. The sound of applause is reminiscent of the opening of *Mulholland Drive* , which ends with the blurry image of Betty in the spotlight receiving the applause of an imagined audience.

29. Such a transit is hinted at after the shot of the spotlight which ends the fragment: there is another superimposition with the Lost Girl and her husband and afterwards we are back in Nikki Grace's mansion together with the strange lady who points to Nikki sitting on a sofa in her house.

30. One more work is linked to this veiling fragment: There is a very short clip from *Ballerina* in the *Absurda/Scissors* three-minute film for the Cannes jubilee, I mentioned in the previous chapter.

31. For a list of all performances see Ivie (2017). Retrieved at https://www.vulture.com/2017/09/twin-peaks-band-guide.html.

32. For a discussion on the return of "Just You" see Hall (2020).

33. A minor correction to Joel Hawkes's article: Audrey does not want to go to the Roadhouse to see James but to find Billy, her presumed lover.

Chapter 7

1. I use the name Bad Cooper here, just as I did in the previous chapter. Sanna (ed.) (2018) uses both Bad Cooper and Mr C.

2. From now on, after having unravelled the etymology of the German word, I use the English word "uncanny".

3. In her discussion of Jentsch and Freud, Laura Mulvey contemplates the ways the two thinkers could meet, Freud who thought of the uncanny related to something" old and familiear" and Jentsch whose mind was on the uncertainty in the new (the automaton between dead and alive). She argues that their thinking unites in the occupation with visual illusions and how this provoked feelings of the uncanny: "Jentsch's argument then meets Freud's uncanny [in] the persistence in the human mind of belief in the supernatural and in the return of the dead" (Mulvey 2006: 42).

4. For a similar critique but different reading that focuses on repressed homosexuality see Cixous (1976). For a reading of "The Sandman", which argues that Nathanael's final leap into insanity comes from seeing the ordinariness of Clara, not how the "spyglass" constructs her as unfamiliar, see Cavell (1988). Moreover, in *The Freudian Robot* (2010, Chap. 6) Lydia Liu asks whether it is not also Nathanael who is an automaton. I would also like to draw attention to Alice Kuzniar's (1989) brilliant reading of *Blue Velvet* in which she convincingly

demonstrates structural similarities between Lynch's film and E.T.A. Hoffman's story.

5. This manufactured Diane is a tough and hard woman. Sitting in the bar, smoking and drinking, she delivers information she suddenly remembers to, probably, Bad Coop. The repressed has returned—she was raped by a person she thought was Cooper—and she goes determined, gun in her bag, to meet with Gordon, Albert and Tammy, while on the soundtrack we hear lyrics from Lynch's remix of Muddy Magnolias' "American Woman": "I know my worth and who I am/Mister, if you are hard up, I can spare a few grand/Hell will freeze over and I'll be damned/Before I take orders from any old man."

6. But maybe not for the last time: during the end credits, the older Cooper is back, and Laura is back whispering in his ears.

7. The images of Sandy and Jeffrey sitting in Jeffrey's car in front of Dorothy Vallens' apartment building come to mind, or rather memories of the 30-years-younger Laura Dern and Kyle MacLachlan at a similar spot.

8. A similar landscape, though not as rough, is used for the music video for David Lynch and Lykke Li's "I'm Waiting Here". Retrieved at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SpG7C4vHZQ.

9. By contrast, Lindsay Hallam (2019: 33) sees that Diane leaves "after a traumatizing sexual encounter with Dale Cooper that recalls the trauma of her earlier rape, rather than allowing her to work through it".

10. There is a strange, almost uncanny resemblance between the Woodsmen manipulating Bad Cooper back to life by touching his body and some men in dark overalls with helmets and black masks making the same movements with their lights over the body of a monsterlike creature lying on the stage in Lynch's and Badalamenti's *Industrial Symphony No. 1* back in 1990.

11. The original French passage (Baudrillard 1986: 249) sounds slightly different: "espace immémorial où les choses perdent leur ombre, où l'argent perd sa valeur, et où l'extrême rareté des traces et de ce qui y fait signe conduit les hommes à rechercher l'instantanéité de la richesse."

12. Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli writes perceptively: "The digital uncanny does not erase the uncanny feeling we develop when confronted with robots that are too lifelike or when we experience déjà vu. What it does

do, however, is add another dimension to them, questioning whether these responses are subjective or automated by reducing one's subjectivity to data patterns and using them to design objects that would thereby elicit one's genuinely subjective (but effectively preset) response" (2019: 4–5).

13. Yet, he is in a sense made by a computer. Dougie is a fantasy by a computerized, gamified contemporary world in which anything can be duplicated and repeated quickly ad infinitum.

14. Although Allister Mactaggart claims that the sublime is often mentioned in relation to Lynch (2010: 53), not much has actually been written about Lynch and the sublime. What has been written is often quite brief (see Zizek 2002; Gaehtgens 2009; Shaw 2019) compared to the number of discussions on the uncanny and Lynch.

15. By contrast, Carol Vernallis' (2017) discussion of the audio-visual sublime in Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby* focuses on different kinds of "spectacular overload" in Luhrmann's images.

16. This quote has also been translated as "raise the soul's fortitude above its usual middle range [Mitelmass] and allow us to discover in ourselves an ability to resist [widerstehen] which is of a quite different kind and which gives us the courage [to believe] that we could be a match for nature's seeming omnipotence" (Shaw 2017: 104). It seems to me that the translation in Adams makes clearer the transgression inherent in the sublime and that facing the sublime is not about match but about difference.

17. In an interview in the *Guardian* (Carroll 2018), Lynch said in an elegantly ambiguous way about Trump: "He could go down as one of the greatest presidents in history because he has disrupted the thing so much. No one is able to counter this guy in an intelligent way." After Trump had referred to Lynch's remark in a rally, Lynch posted an open letter to Trump on his Facebook page on June 26, 2018, explaining that the quote was taken out of context. In addition, he wrote:
"Unfortunately, if you continue as you have been, you will not have a chance to go down in history as a great president. This would be very sad it seems for you—and for the country. You are causing suffering and division." Retrieved at https://www.theguardian.com/film/2018/jun/26/david-lynch-donald-trump-you-are-causing-suffering-and-division.

18. Likewise, Andrei Ujica said in his conversation with Boris Groys in the *Air is on Fire* catalogue: “We must not forget that the political aspect of Lynch’s images might not have been instilled in them by the artist himself but by you and I, who may have read it into them” (Groys and Ujica 2007: 379). On his YouTube channel, Lynch now and then permits himself to be more explicitly political. In his weather report on June 3rd, 2020, he had put up a large white sheet of cardboard saying “Black Lives Matter. Peace and Justice. No Fear” behind him. In contrast to his usual weather report clips, he rose and left his chair to make the poster visible. Moreover, in his weather report on the second of November, 2020, David Lynch urged people to vote. His plea started this way: “I heard on the news that in the United States there is an election coming up—and they said it is very important if you are a citizen of the United States […] it is very important for you to vote. Maybe, getting a cup of hot coffee and listening to Little Eva singing “Locomotion” [which we know from *Inland Empire*] will motivate you to get out and vote if you haven’t voted already. You only have today and tomorrow”.

19. We know about the Black Lodge from Hawk that “if you confront it with fear it will utterly annihilate your soul”. Because of this sublime element of evil sacredness attached to the Black Lodge, the scene in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, Episode 2, in which Cooper pulls the red curtain aside and reveals a road in plain sharp daylight underneath him is a strange sort of anticlimax. But this revelation coincides with The Red Room falling apart and Bad Cooper being ejected.

20. For a description of this strange, awe-inspiring and mesmerizing room see Rooney (2018). The sequence which follows hereafter is one of the most frightening in *Twin Peaks: The Return*, in my opinion. I see it as an apocalyptic vision of the aftermath of the atomic bomb explosion, in which boundaries between human and animal dissolve, some humans have turned into zombie-like mechanically-repeating creatures and the desert and the darkness has expanded: Another black-and-white specification of time and place, 1956 in the New Mexico desert. Close-ups of textured desert sand, and the close-up of a strange mutation between a beetle, an amphibian and an insect which burst out of its shell. Woodsmen emanate from nowhere in the dark desert and walk like zombies, one of them repeating the question “Gotta light?”

again and again as he stops a car. After this the same woodsman, repeating the same question, crushes a woman's head in a radio station in the desert—while the presenter plays The Platters singing "My Prayer". After also breaking the presenter's head, the woodsman takes the microphone and repeats some strange lines over and over which seem so powerful so that they make listeners to the radio station faint. Finally, the crawling mutant animal climbs into a young girls room, on to her bed and into her mouth—and still the lines are repeated by the woodsman in the radio station's microphone. The sequence ends with him leaving the radio station, going out into the desert and being engulfed by the dark.

21. The sublime has also been connected with the traumatic, for example the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US. Marie-Christine Clemente (2011) discusses the sublime as a useful concept in relation to trauma but also as a highly problematic concept to use in relation to the visuals of the September 11th attacks.

22. According to Monique Rooney (2018) the computer-generated explosion is based on visual material by Lynch. He may also have made use of some of the original footage that exists of the explosion, which run a little under two minutes. The original footage can be seen in a clip made by the YouTube channel Atomcentral (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dfK9G7UDok). Atomcentral has also restored this footage and compiled it (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wki4hg9Om-k). The last scene of Stanley Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove* (1964) may also have been of inspiration. It takes the form of a montage of footage of nuclear tests (including the Trinity test) while on the equally disturbing soundtrack Very Lynn sings her Second World War hit "We'll Meet Again" about meeting again "some sunny day".

References

Adams, H. (Ed.). (1992). *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Thomson Learning.

Adorno, T. W. (1984 [1958]). The Essay as Form. *New German Critique, 32*, 151–171.

Ahmed, S. (2014 [2004]). *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press.

Aliaga, J. V. (1992). Lynch's inferno. In *David Lynch*. Catalogue to the Lynch exhibition at the Sala Parpalló, Palau dels Scala, Valencia, May–June 1992, pp. 13–21.

Anderson, B. (2009). Affective Atmospheres. *Emotion, Space and Society, 2*, 77–81.

Anderson, B. (2016). *Encountering Affect*. Routledge.

Andersson, D. T. (2014). No Man's Land. The Ontology of a Space Left Over. In B. Olson & T. Petursdottir (Eds.), *Ruin Memories. Materialities, Aesthetics and the Archaeology of the Recent Past* (pp. 287–304). Routledge.

Andrew, D. (2010 [2000]). *What Cinema Is!: Bazin's Quest and Its Charge*. John Wiley & Sons.

Appelo, T. (2014, September 10). Simon Le Bon on David Lynch's 'Duran Duran: Unstaged': "It's Quite Bizarre". *The Hollywood Reporter*. https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/simon-le-bon-david-lynchs-732021

Ashfield, A., & de Bolla, P. (1996). *The Sublime. A Reader in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory*. Cambridge University Press.

Aston, J., & Gaudenzi, S. (2012). Interactive Documentary: Setting the Field. *Studies in Documentary Film, 6*(2), 125–139.

Aumont, J. (2017). The Veiled Image. In M. Beugnet, A. Cameron, & A. Fetveit (Eds.), *Cinema and the Attractions of Uncertainty* (pp. 17–37). Edinburgh University Press.

Barnes, F. (2014, January 13). I Don't Know Where it Came from, but I Love Curtains. There is Something So Incredibly Cosmically Magical about Curtains Opening and Revealing a New World. *Time Out London*. https://www.timeout.com/london/art/david-lynch-interview-there-is-something-so-incredibly-cosmically-magical-about-curtains

Barney, R. A. (2009). *Inland Empire*, Transcendental Meditation, and the "Swim" of Ideas. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 251–267). University Press of Missisippi.

Barthes, R. (2010 [1979]). *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Hill and Wang.

Battersby, C. (2007). *The Sublime, Terror and Human Difference*. Routledge.

Baudrillard, J. (1986). *Amérique*. Grasset.

Baudrillard, J. (1999 [1986]). *America*. Verso.

Bazin, A. (2005 [1967]). The Ontology of the Photographic Image. In *What is Cinema, Vol. 1* (pp. 9–16). University of California Press.

Beaumont, M. (2020, May 21). David Lynch is Turning into Cinema's Biggest Lockdown Hero. *NME*. https://www.nme.com/features/david-lynch-lockdown-hero-2673397

Berra, J. (2012). *Lady Blue Shanghai*. The Strange Case of David Lynch and Dior. *Film, Fashion and Consumption, 1*(3), 233–250.

Berry, J. (2013). Unfolding Fashion's Fictions: Fashion Film and the Narrative Possibilities of Dress. *Catwalk: The Journal of Fashion, Beauty and Style, 2*(1), 47–62.

Beugnet, M. (2017). Introduction. In M. Beugnet, A. Cameron, & A. Fetveit (Eds.), *Indefinite*

Visions. Cinema and the Attractions of Uncertainty. Edinburgh University Press.

Beugnet, M., Cameron, A., & Fetveit, A. (Eds.). (2017). *Indefinite Visions. Cinema and the Attractions of Uncertainty*. Edinburgh University Press.

Bille, M. (2018). Review: Gernot Böhme, 2017, *The Aesthetics of Atmospheres*. Edited by Jean-Paul Thibaud. *Ambiances*. https://journals.openedition.org/ambiances/1065

Bille, M. (2019). The Lightness of Atmospheric Communities. In T. Griffero & M. Tedeschini (Eds.), *Atmosphere and Aesthetics. A Plural Perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Bille, M., Bjerregaard, P., & Sørensen, T. F. (2015). Staging Atmospheres. Materiality, Culture and the Texture of the In-Between. *Emotion, Space and Society, 15*, 31–38.

Birchall, D. (2009). Online Documentary. In T. Austin & W. de Jong (Eds.), *Rethinking Documentary. New Perspectives, New Practices*. McGraw Hill.

Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells. Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. Verso.

Bjerregaard, P. (2015). Dissolving Objects: Museums, Atmosphere and the Creation of Presence. *Emotion, Space and Society, 15*, 74–81.

Blanchot, M. (1983). The Athenaeum. *Studies in Romanticism, 22*(2), 163–172.

Blom, I. (2007). *On the Style Site: Art, Sociality, and Media Culture*. Sternberg Press.

Böhme, G. (1993). Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics. *Thesis Eleven, 36*(1), 113–126.

Böhme, G. (2017). *The Aesthetics of Atmospheres* (J.-P. Thibaud, Ed.). Routledge.

Böhme, G. (2018 [2013]). *Atmospheric Architectures. The Aesthetics of Felt Spaces*. Bloomsbury Academics.

Bordwell, D., & Thompson, K. (2013 [1979]). *Film Art. An Introduction*. McGraw-Hill.

Bowen, C. (2019). Review: *Someone Is in My House* Showcases the Reach of David Lynch's Obsessions. *Slant Magazine*. https://www.slantmagazine.com/books/review-someone-is-in-my-house-showcases-the-reach-of-david-lynchs-obsessions/

Brady, E. (2013). *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy, Aesthetics, Ethics, and Nature*. Cambridge University Press.

Breskin, D. (1990, September 6). Interview with David Lynch. *Rolling Stone*. http://davidbreskin.com/magazines/1-interviews/david-lynch-2/

Breskin, D. (2009). David Lynch. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 60–106). University Press of Missisippi.

Brinkema, E. (2014). *The Forms of the Affect*. Duke University Press.

Brooks, P. (1985). *The Melodramatic Imagination*. Columbia University Press.

Brubach, H. (2007, February 25). A Moving Canvas. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/25/style/tmagazine/25tlynch.html

Bruhn, J. (2016). *The Intermediality of Narrative Literature: Medialities Matter*. Macmillan Publishers.

Buchli, V., & Lucas, G. (2001). *Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past*. Routledge.

Carroll, R. (2018, June 23). David Lynch: 'You Gotta Be Selfish. It's a Terrible Thing'. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/film/2018/jun/23/david-lynch-gotta-be-selfish-twin-peaks

Cataldo, J. (2011, November 7). Review: David Lynch, *Crazy Clown Time*. *Slant Magazine*. https://www.slantmagazine.com/music/david-lynch-crazy-clown-time/

Cavell, S. (1988). The Uncanniness of the Ordinary. In S. Cavell (Ed.), *Quest for the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism* (pp. 153–181). University of Chicago Press.

Chion, M. (2006). *David Lynch* (2nd ed.). BFI Publishing.

Christiansen, S. L. (2017). *Drone Age Cinema. Action Film and Sensory Assault*. I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.

Cixous, H. (1976). Fiction and Its Phantoms: A Reading of Freud's Das Unheimliche (The "uncanny"). *New Literary History, 7*(3), 525–548.

Clark, T. (1992). Modern Transformations of German Romanticism: Blanchot and Derrida on the Fragment, the Aphorism and the Architectural. *Paragraph, 15*(3), 232–247.

Clemente, M.-C. (2012). The Sublime Dimension of 9/11. In G. B. Pierce (Ed.), *The Sublime Today: Contemporary Readings in the Aesthetic*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Collins, J., & Jervis, J. (Eds.). (2008). *Uncanny Modernity. Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Cooke, G. (2008). Effacing the Face: Botox and the Anarchivic Archive. *Body & Society, 14*(2), 23–38.

Cooke, G. (2009). The Cosmeceutical Face: Time-Fighting Technologies and the Archive. *Transformations, 17*, 1–11.

Copping, N. (2010, May 15). David Lynch's New Film for Christian Dior. *Financial Times*. https://www.ft.com/content/38daed66-5ecc-11df-af86-00144feab49a

Correm, T. (2011). Constellations of the Flesh. The Embodied Self in *The Straight Story* and *The Elephant Man*. In W. J. Devlin & S. Biderman (Eds.), *The Philosophy of David Lynch*. University Press of Kentucky.

Cowie, E. (2011). *Recording Reality, Desiring the Real*. University of Minnesota Press.

Cozzolino, R. (2014). David Lynch: The Unified Field. In *The Unified Field* (pp. 13–45). Exhibition Catalogue. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts/University of California Press.

Davison, A. (2004). 'Up in Flames'. Love, Control and Collaboration in the Soundtrack to *Wild at Heart*. In E. Sheen & A. Davison (Eds.), *The Cinema of David Lynch. American Dreams, Nightmare Visions* (pp. 119–136). Wallflower Press.

Deleuze, G. (1991 [1983]). *Cinema 1. The Movement-Image*. The University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. University of Minnesota Press.

Denson, S., & Leyda, J. (2016). Perspectives on Post-Cinema: An Introduction. In S. Denson & J. Leyda (Eds.), *Post-Cinema: Theorizing 21st-Century Film* (pp. 1–20). Reframe Books.

Desilvey, C. (2006). Observed Decay. Telling Stories with Mutable Things. *Journal of Material Culture, 11*(3), 318–338.

Dezeuze, A. (2017). *Almost Nothing. Observations on Precarious Practices in Contemporary Art*. Manchester University Press.

Diekmann, S. (2009). The Corroded Surface. On David Lynch's Photographs and Prints. In *Dark Splendor* catalogue (pp. 203–212). Hatje Cantz Verlag.

Dillon, S. (2005). Reinscribing De Quincey's Palimpsest: The Significance of the Palimpsest in Contemporary Literary and Cultural Studies. *Textual Practice, 19*(3), 243–263.

Dillon, S. (2007). *The Palimpsest. Literature, Criticism, Theory*. Continuum.

Doane, M. A. (2002). *The Emergence of Cinematic Time. Modernity, Contingency, and the Archive*. Harvard University Press.

Doane, M. A. (2003). The Close-Up: Scale and Detail in the Cinema. *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies, 14*(3), 89–111.

Doane, M. A. (2007). Imaging Contingency: An Interview with Mary Ann Doane. *Parallax, 13*(4), 16–25.

Dom, P. (2014). The Making of David Lynch's Playstation Commercial: The Third Place (video). *Welcome to Twin Peaks*. https://welcometotwinpeaks.com/lynch/david-lynch-playstation-commercial-making-of/

Dorrian, M. (2014). Museum Atmospheres: Notes on Aura, Distance and Affect. *The Journal of Architecture, 19*(2), 187–201.

Douridas, C. (2009 [2006]). Interview. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 150–163). University Press of Missisippi.

Dovey, J. (2000). *Freak Show. First Person Media and Factual Television*. Pluto Press.

Dovey, J., & Rose, M. (2013). This Great Mapping of Ourselves—New Documentary Forms Online. In B. Winston (Ed.), *The Documentary Film Book* (pp. 366–375). Palgrave Macmillan/BFI Publishing.

Dufrenne, M. (1973 [1953]). *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*. Northwestern

University Press.

Edensor, T. (2005a). *Industrial Ruins. Spaces, Aesthetics and Materiality*. Berg Publishing.

Edensor, T. (2005b). The Ghosts of Industrial Ruins: Ordering and Disordering Memory in Excessive Space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 23*, 829–849.

Edensor, T. (2005c). Waste Matter—The Debris of Industrial Ruins and the Disordering of the Material World. *Journal of Material Culture, 10*(3), 311–332.

Elleström, L. (2010). Introduction. In L. Elleström (Ed.), *Media Borders. Multimodality and Intermediality* (pp. 1–8). Palgrave Macmillan.

Elsaesser, T., & Hagener, M. (2015). *Film Theory. An Introduction Through the Senses* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Emden, C. J., & Rippl, G. (2010). Introduction. In C. J. Emden & G. Rippl (Eds.), *ImageScapes: Studies in Intermediality* (pp. 1–18). Peter Lang.

Engdahl, H. (1992 [1988]). Anteckningar om fragmentet [Reflections on the Fragment]. In H. Engdahl, *Stilen och lyckan* [Style and Happiness]. Bonniers.

Esther, J. (2009 [2006]). David Lynch and Laura Dern: *Inland Empire*. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 246–251). University Press of Missisippi.

Ewins, M. (2018). The Stars Turn and a Time Presents Itself. *Sight & Sound, 28*(1), 33–36.

Fetscher, J. (2011). Tendency, Disintegration, Decay: Stages of the Aesthetics of the Fragment from Friedrich Schlegel to Thomas Bernhard. In D. Follett & A. Finger (Eds.), *The Aesthetics of the Total Artwork: On Borders and Fragments* (pp. 52–74). The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Fetveit, A. (2013). Medium-Specific Noise. In L. Hausken (Ed.), *Thinking Media Aesthetics. Media Studies, Film Studies and the Arts*. Peter Lang.

Finger, A., & Follett, D. (Eds.). (2011). *The Aesthetics of the Total Artwork. On Borders and Fragments*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Firchow, P. (1971). *Friedrich Schlegel's Lucinde and the Fragments*. University of Minnesota Press.

Fisher, M. (2016). *The Weird and the Eerie*. Repeater Books.

Follett, D. (2011). *Tout et N'importe Quoi*: The Total Artwork and the Aesthetics of Chance. In D. Follett & A. Finger (Eds.), *The Aesthetics of the Total Artwork: On Borders and Fragments*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Foucault, M. (1986 [1967]). Of Other Spaces. *Diacritics, 16*(1), 22–27.

Fox, K. (2019, June 30). Interview: David Lynch: It's Important to Go Out and Feel the So-called Reality. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/jun/30/david-lynch-interview-manchester-international-festival

Freud, S. (1988 [1919]). *The Uncanny*. In *The Pelican Freud Library Volume 14* (pp. 335–377). Penguin Books.

Friedberg, A. (2006). *The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft*. MIT Press.

Frow, J. (2002). Signature and Brand. In J. Collins (Ed.), *High-Pop. Making Culture into Popular Entertainment* (pp. 56–75). Blackwell Publishers.

Gaehtgens, T. W. (2009). Beauty and the Sublime. In *Dark Splendor* catalogue (pp. 69–109). Hatje Cantz Verlag.

Galow, T. W. (2019). From *Lost Highway* to *Twin Peaks*: Representations of Trauma and Transformation in Lynch's Late Work. In A. Sanna (Ed.), *Critical Essays on Twin Peaks: The Return* (pp. 201–221). Palgrave Macmillan.

Genette, G. (1997 [1982]). *Palimpsests. Literature in the Second Degree*. University of Nebraska Press.

Gilleard, C., & Higgs, P. (2000). *Cultures of Ageing. Self, Citizen and the Body*. Pearson Education Limited.

Giloy-Hirtz, P. (2014). *David Lynch: The Factory Photographs*. Prestel.

Goddard, M. (2016, July). Telephones, Voice Recorders, Microphones, Phonographs: A Media Archaeology of Sonic Technologies in *Twin Peaks*. *Senses of Cinema*, no. 79. http://sensesofcinema.com/2016/twin-peaks/sonic-technologies-in-twin-peaks/

Griffero, T. (2010). *Atmospheres: Aesthetics of Emotional Spaces*. Routledge.

Griffero, T. (2019). Is There Such a Thing as an "Atmospheric Turn"? Instead of an Introduction. In T. Griffero & M. Tedeschini (Eds.), *Atmosphere and Aesthetics. A Plural Perspective* (pp. 11–62). Palgrave Macmillan.

Griffero, T., & Tedeschini, M. (Eds.). (2019). *Atmosphere and Aesthetics. A Plural Perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Grønstad, A. (2020). *Rethinking Art and Visual Culture. The Poetics of Opacity*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Grossman, J., & Scheibel, W. (2020). *Twin Peaks*. Wayne State University Press.

Groys, B., & Ujica, A. (2007). On the Art of David Lynch. A Conversation. In *The Air is on Fire Catalogue* (pp. 377–384). Paris: Fondation Cartier.

Grusin, R. (2016). DVDs, Video Games, and the Cinema of Interactions. In S. Denson & J. Leyda (Eds.), *Post-Cinema: Theorizing 21st-Century Film* (pp. 65–88). Reframe Books.

Gulddal, J. (2000). Indledning [Introduction]. In *Friedrich Schlegel. Athenäum Fragmenter* [Friedrich Schlegel. Athenäum Fragments]. Gyldendal.

Gunning, T. (2019). A Voice That Is Not Mine: Terror and the Mythology of the Technological Voice. In M. Feldman & J. T. Zeitlin (Eds.), *The Voice as Something More. Essays toward*

Materiality (pp. 325–335). Chicago University Press.

Hainge, G. (2004). Weird or Loopy? Specular Spaces, Feedback and Artifice in Lost Highway's Aesthetics of Sensation. In E. Sheen & A. Davison (Eds.), *The Cinema of David Lynch. American Dreams, Nightmare Visions* (pp. 136–151). Wallflower Press.

Hainge, G. (2012). *Noise Matters: Towards an Ontology of Noise*. Bloomsbury.

Hall, S. (2020, February 15). Sentiment, Mood, and Performing the Past: James Hurley's Re-enactment of "Just You" in Twin Peaks: The Return. NANO, *New American Notes Online*. https://nanocrit.com/issues/issue15

Hallam, L. (2018). *Twin Peaks Fire Walk with Me*. Auteur Publishing.

Hallam, L. (2019). Women's Films: Melodrama and Women's Trauma in the Films of David Lynch. In D. Lushman (Ed.), *The Women of David Lynch: A Collection of Essays*. Fayetteville Mafia Press.

Halskov, A. (2015). *TV Peaks. Twin Peaks and Modern Television Drama*. University Press of Southern Denmark.

Harrington, C. L. (2016). Time, Memory and Aging on the Soaps. In M. Oró-Piqueras & A. Wohlmann (Eds.), *Serializing Age*. Transcript Verlag.

Hawkes, J. (2019). Movement in the Box: The Production of Surreal Social Space and the Alienated Body. In A. Sanna (Ed.), *Critical Essays on Twin Peaks: The Return* (pp. 149–169). Palgrave Macmillan.

Hegarty, P. (2007). *Noise/Music: A History*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Heinrichs, J., & Spielmann, Y. (2002). Editorial. *Convergence, 8*(4), 5–10.

Henry, M. (2009 [1999]). David Lynch. A 180-Degree Turnaround. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 213–222). University Press of Missisippi.

Hertz, N. (1985). Freud and the Sandman. In *The End of the Line. Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime* (pp. 97–122). Columbia University Press.

Hewitt, T. (2009 [1986]). Is There Life After Dune? In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 29–34). University Press of Missisippi.

Higgins, D. (2001). Intermedia. *Leonardo, 34*(1), 49–54.

Hight, C. (2008). The Field of Digital Documentary: A Challenge to Documentary Theorists. *Studies in Documentary Film, 2*(1), 3–7.

Hoberman, J. (1999, October 12). Time Regained. *The Village Voice*. https://www.villagevoice.com/1999/10/12/time-regained/

Hoberman, J. (2014, December 9). David Lynch's Bad Thoughts. *The New York Review of Books*. https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2014/12/09/david-lynch-bad-thoughts/

Holland, T. (2016). 'Crazy Clown Time' and David Lynch's Parties. *Screen, 57*(4), 446–467.

Hudson, D. (2008). Undisclosed Recipients: Database Documentaries and the Internet. *Studies in Documentary Film, 2*(1), 79–98.

Huijts, S. (2018a). Preface. In S. Huijts (Ed.), Exhibition Catalogue to *David Lynch. Someone is in My House* (pp. 4–5). Hannibal.

Huijts, S. (2018b). Dark Matter. In S. Huijts (Ed.), Exhibition Catalogue to *David Lynch. Someone is in My House* (pp. 31–36). Hannibal.

Huyssen, A. (2006). Nostalgia for Ruins. *Grey Room, 23*, 6–21.

Israel, A. (2011). David Lynch Interview. *Purple Magazine*, no. 16. https://purple.fr/magazine/fw-2011-issue-16/david-lynch/

Ivie, D. (2017a, September 5). Your Guide to All the Bands in *Twin Peaks*. *Vulture*. https://www.vulture.com/2017/09/twin-peaks-band-guide.html

Ivie, D. (2017b, August 29). So, What's Going on with Audrey Horne in *Twin Peaks: The Return*? *Vulture*. https://www.vulture.com/2017/08/twin-peaks-the-return-audrey-horne.html

Jackson, K. (1999). The Straight Story. *Sight and Sound, 9*(12), 57–58.

Jensen, J. (2012, February 10). David Lynch on His New Album 'Crazy Clown Time' and First-Look Photos from His 'Psychotic' Music Video—EXCLUSIVE. *Entertainment Weekly Online*. https://ew.com/article/2012/02/10/david-lynch-interview-crazy-clown-time/

Jentsch, E. (1996 [1906]). On the Psychology of the Uncanny. English translation in *Angeliki*. http://www.art3idea.psu.edu/locus/Jentsch_uncanny.pdf

Jerslev, A. (1995 [1991]). *David Lynch—Mentale Landschaften*. Passagen Verlag.

Jerslev, A. (2003). Beyond Boundaries. David Lynch's *Lost Highway*. In E. Sheen & A. Davison (Eds.), *The Cinema of David Lynch. American Dreams, Nightmare Visions* (pp. 151–165). Wallflower Press.

Jerslev, A. (2012). The Post-perspectival: Screens and Time in David Lynch's Inland Empire. *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture, 4*(1), 1–11.

Jerslev, A. (2014). David Lynch between Analogue and Digital: *Lost Highway, The Straight Story* and the *Interview Project*. In L. Nagib & A. Jerslev (Eds.), *Impure Cinema. Intermedial and Intercultural Approaches to Film* (pp. 282–300). I. B. Tauris.

Jervis, J. (2008). Uncanny Presences. In J. Collins & J. Jervis (Eds.), *Uncanny Modernity. Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Johnson, J. (2004). *The Pervert in the Pulpit. Morality in the Works of David Lynch*. McFarland & Co Publishers.

Jones, A. (2013). Chris Burden's Bridges, Relationality, and the Conceptual Body. In L. Phillips (Ed.), *Chris Burden. Extreme Measures* (pp. 110–134). Skira Rizzoli and the New Museum.

Kasman, D. (2011, July 11). Video of the Day. David Lynch's "Lady Blue Shanghai" (2010). *Notebook* (NUBI). https://mubi.com/it/notebook/posts/video-of-the-day-david-lynchs-lady-blue-shanghai-2010

Kelley, M., & McEvilley, T. (2003 [1993]). From the Sublime to the Uncanny. A Conversation. In J. C. Welchman (Ed.), *Foul Perfection. Essays and Criticism*. MIT Press.

Kember, J. (2004). David Lynch and the Mug Shot: Facework in *The Elephant Man* and *The Straight Story*. In E. Sheen & A. Davison (Eds.), *The Cinema of David Lynch: American Dreams, Nightmare Visions* (pp. 19–35). Wallflower.

Kofman, S. (1991 [1974]). *Freud and Fiction*. Polity Press.

Kotler, P. (1973–74). Atmospherics as a Marketing Tool. *Journal of Retailing, 49*(4), 48–64.

Krasniewicz, L. (2000). Magical Transformations: Morphing and Metamorphosis in Two Cultures. In V. Sobchack (Ed.), *Meta-Morphing: Visual Transformation and the Culture of Quick-Change* (pp. 41–59). University of Minnesota Press.

Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe II (ed. Hans Eichner, 1981). Ferdinand Schöning Verlag.

Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe XVI (ed. Hans Eichner, 1981). Ferdinand Schöning Verlag.

Kuzniar, A. (1989). Ears Looking at You: E. T. A. Hoffmann's "The Sandman" and David Lynch's "Blue Velvet". *South Atlantic Review, 54*(2), 7–21.

Lacoue-Labarthe, P., & Nancy, J.-L. (1988 [1978]). *The Literary Absolute. The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*. State University of New York Press.

Lee, S. H. (2011). The Horrors of Life's Hidden Mysteries: Blue Velvet. In W. J. Devlin & S. Biderman (Eds.), *The Philosophy of David Lynch* (pp. 45–60). University Press of Kentucky.

Lehrer, A. (2017). Ep. 8 of 'Twin Peaks' is David Lynch's Purest Marriage of Television and Video Art. *Forbes Magazine*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/adamlehrer/2017/07/07/ep-8-of-twin-peaks-is-david-lynchs-purest-marriage-of-television-and-video-art/?sh=4826c4e7526b

Levin, T. Y. (2002). Rhetoric of the Temporal Index: Surveillant Narration and the Cinema of "Real Time". In T. Y. Levin, U. Frohne, & P. Weibel (Eds.), *CTRL Space. Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*. ZKM & MIT Press.

Lim, D. (2007). David Lynch Goes Digital. *Slate*. http://www.slate.com/id/2172678

Lim, D. (2015). *The Man from Another Planet*. Amazon Publishing.

Liu, L. H. (2010). *The Freudian Robot. Digital Media and the Future of the Unconscious*. The University of Chicago Press.

Lombardo, P. (2014). *Memory and Imagination in Film. Scorsese, Lynch, Jarmusch, Van Sant*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Lucas, T. (1998). Kiss Me Doubly: Notes on David Lynch's Lost Highway. *Video Watchdog, 43*, 27–35.

Lynch, D. (2006). *Catching the Big Fish. Meditation, Consciousness, and Creativity*. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin.

Lynch, D. (2007a). *Nudes*. Fondation Cartier.

Lynch, D. (2007b). *Snowmen*. Fondation Cartier.

Lynch, D., & Gifford, B. (1997). *Lost Highway*. Faber and Faber.

Lynch, D., & McKenna, K. (2018). *Room to Dream*. Penguin Random House.

Mactaggart, A. (2010). *The Film Paintings of David Lynch. Challenging Film Theory*. Intellect Press.

Mactaggart, A. (2014). "Silencio": Hearing Loss in David Lynch's Mulholland Drive. *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture, 6*, 1–11.

Malkinson, A. (2016). "Damn Fine Coffee" Advertising: David Lynch's TV Commercial Adaptation of Twin Peaks. *Senses of Cinema*, no. 79. https://www.sensesofcinema.com/2016/twin-peaks/26839/

Manovich, L. (2001). *The Language of New Media*. MIT Press.

Marks, L. U. (2000). *The Skin of the Film. Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses*. Duke University Press.

Marks, L. U. (2002). *Touch. Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. University of Minnesota Press.

Maroja, C. (2014). Introduction. Approaching Precariousness in Art. In C. Maroja, C. Menezes, & F. A. Poltronieri (Eds.), *The Permanence in the Transient: Precariousness in Art*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Maroja, C., Menezes, C., & Poltronieri, F. A. (Eds.). (2014). *The Permanence in the Transient: Precariousness in Art*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Marshall, P. D., Moore, C., & Barbour, K. (2020). *Persona Studies. An Introduction*. Wiley & Sons.

Martin, R. (2014). *The Architecture of David Lynch*. Bloomsbury Press.

Massumi, B. (2002). *Parables for the Virtual. Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Duke University Press.

McGowan, T. (2007). *The Impossible David Lynch*. Columbia University Press.

McKenna, K. (1992). An Interview with David Lynch. In the exhibition catalogue for *David Lynch*. Sala Parpalló. Diputación Provincial de Valencia, pp. 21–33.

McKenna, K. (2007). Interview with David Lynch. In the exhibition catalogue for *The Air is on Fire*. Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, pp. 16–39.

McKenna, K. (2018). Painting is a Place. In the exhibition catalogue for *David Lynch. Someone is in My House*, pp. 11–22. Hannibal.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1994). *Picture Theory. Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*. University of Chicago Press.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (2005). There are No Visual Media. *Journal of Visual Culture, 4*(2), 257–266.

Mittell, J. (2015). *Complex TV. The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling*. New York University Press.

Morgan, C. L. (1998). *Jean Nouvel. The Elements of Architecture*. Thames & Hudson.

Morley, S. (2010). Introduction. The Contemporary Sublime. In S. Morley (Ed.), *The Sublime*. Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press.

Mulvey, L. (2006). *Death 24x a Second. Stillness and the Moving Image*. Reaction Books.

Munch, A. V. (2012). *Design as Gesamtkunstwerk: The Art of Transgression*. Rhodos.

Munster, A. (2006). *Materializing New Media: Embodiment in Information Aesthetics*. University Press of New England.

Nagib, L. (2014). The Politics of Impurity. In L. Nagib & A. Jerslev (Eds.), *Impure Cinema. Intermedial and Intercultural Approaches to Film* (pp. 21–41). I. B. Tauris.

Nagib, L., & Jerslev, A. (2014). Introduction. In L. Nagib & A. Jerslev (Eds.), *Impure Cinema. Intermedial and Intercultural Approaches to Film* (pp. xviii–xxxi). I. B. Tauris.

Nechvatal, J. (2011). *Immersion Into Noise*. Open Humanities Press.

Newman, B. (2010 [1948]). The Sublime is Now. In S. Morley (Ed.), *The Sublime* (pp. 25–27). Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press.

Nieland, J. (2012). *David Lynch*. University of Illinois Press.

Nochimson, M. P. (1997). *The Passion of David Lynch*. University of Texas Press.

Nochimson, M. P. (2013). *David Lynch Swerves. Uncertainty from Lost Highway to Inland Empire*. University of Texas Press.

O'Dell, K. (1998). *Contract with the Skin: Masochism, Performance Art and the 1970s*. University of Minnesota Press.

O'Falt, C. (2017, September 25). 'Twin Peaks: The Return': Even David Lynch's Cinematographer Can't Explain What It All Means. *Indie Wire*. https://www.indiewire.com/2017/09/twin-peaks-return-cinematographer-peter-deming-david-lynch-1201878462/

O'Flynn, S. (2012). Documentary's Metamorphic Form: Webdoc, Interactive, Transmedia, Participatory and Beyond. *Studies in Documentary Film, 6*(2), 141–157.

O'Hagan, S. (2007, February 25). You Don't Walk Away Until It Feels Correct. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2007/feb/25/art.davidlynch

O'Sullivan, J. (2017). Modernist Intermediality: The False Dichotomy between High Modernism and Mass Culture. *English Studies, 98*(3), 283–309.

Odell, C., & LeBlanc, M. (2007). *David Lynch*. Kamera Books.

Ostermann, E. (1991). *Das Fragment. Geschichte einer ästetischen Idee*. Wilhelm Fink Verlag.

Petersen, A. R. (2015). *Installation Art. Between Image and Stage*. Museum Tusculanum Press.

Pethö, Á. (2011). *Cinema and Intermediality: The Passion for the In-Between*. Cambridge Scholars Publisher.

Petursdottir, T. (2014). Things out-of-hand. The aesthetics of abandonment. In B. Olson & T. Petursdottir (Eds.), *Ruin Memories. Materialities, Aesthetics and the Archaeology of the Recent Past* (pp. 335–365). Routledge.

Phelan, P. (2012). Violence and Rupture: Misfires of the Ephemeral. In P. Phelan (Ed.), *Live Art in LA. Performance in Southern California, 1970–1983*. Routledge.

Phillips, L. (2013). Double Bind. In L. Phillips (Ed.), *Chris Burden. Extreme Measures*. Skira Rizzoli and the New Museum.

Pizzello, S. (2009). Highway to Hell. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 170–180). University Press of Missisippi.

Plantinga, C. R. (1997). *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*. Cambridge University Press.

Platthaus, A. (2009). The Lord of the Inland Empire. In *Dark Splendor* catalogue (pp. 269–284). Hatje Cantz Verlag.

Powell, M. (2011, November 8). David Lynch: Crazy Clown Time. *Pitchfork*. https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/15999-david-lynch-crazy-clown-time/

Powers, J. (2009 [2001]). Getting Lost is Beautiful. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 222–232). University Press of Missisippi.

Pranolo, J. (2011). Laura Dern's Eternal Return. *Screen, 52*(4), 477–492.

Rank, O. (1971 [1914]). *The Double*. The University of North Carolina Press.

Rauh, A. (2017). In the Clouds: On the Vagueness of Atmospheres. *Ambiances*. https://journals.openedition.org/ambiances/818

Ravetto-Biagioli, K. (2019). *Digital Uncanny*. Oxford University Press.

Rodley, C. (2005 [1997]). *Lynch on Lynch* (Rev. ed.). Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Rodowick, D. N. (2007). *The Virtual Life of Film*. Harvard University Press.

Rooney, M. (2018). Air-Object: On Air Media and David Lynch's 'Gotta Light?' (*Twin Peaks: The Return*, 2017). *New Review of Film and Television Studies, 16*(2), 123–143.

Rosen, P. (2001). *Change Mummified. Cinema, Historicity, Theory*. University of Minnesota Press.

Ross, C. (2008). Introduction: The Precarious Visualities of Contemporary Art and Visual Culture. In O. Asselin, J. Lamoureux, & C. Ross (Eds.), *Precarious Visualities. New Perspectives on Identification in Contemporary Art and Visual Culture*. McGill-Queen's University Press.

Royle, N. (2003). *The Uncanny*. Manchester University Press.

Ryan, M.-L. (2001). *Narrative as Virtual Reality. Immersion and Interactivity in Literature and Electronic Media*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Ryan, M.-L. (2013). Impossible Worlds and Aesthetic Illusion. In W. Wolf, W. Bernhart, & A. Mahler (Eds.), *Immersion and Distance: Aesthetic Illusion in Literature and Other Media* (pp. 131–148). Editions Rodopi.

Samardzija, Z. (2010, February). Davidlynch.com: Authorship in the Age of the Internet and Digital Cinema. *Scope*, no. 16. http://www.scope.nottingham.ac.uk/article.php?issue=16&id=1171

Sanna, A. (Ed.). (2019). *Critical Essays on Twin Peaks: The Return*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Schafer, M. R. (1994 [1977]). *The Soundscape*. Destiny Books.

Schaffner, A. K. (2009). Fantasmatic Splittings and Destructive Desires: Lynch's *Lost Highway*, *Mulholland Drive*, and *Inland Empire*. *Forum for Modern Language Studies, 45*(3), 270–291.

Scharf, Z. (2019, June 30). David Lynch Calls 'Bullshit' on One Crazy 'Twin Peaks: The Return' Fan Theory. *Indiewire*. https://www.indiewire.com/2019/06/david-lynch-twin-peaks-return-fan-theory-bullshit-1202154491/

Schefer, O. (2011). Variations on Totality: Romanticism and the Total Work of Art. In D. Follett & A. Finger (Eds.), *The Aesthetics of the Total Artwork: On Borders and Fragments*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Schlegel, F. (2000). *Athenäum fragmenter* [Athenäum Fragments]. Gyldendal.

Schmitz, H. (2011). Emotions Outside the Box—The New Phenomenology of Feeling and Corporeality. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences, 10*(2), 241–259. Introduction R. O. Müllan & J. Slaby.

Schmitz, H. (2014). *Atmosphären*. Verlag Karl Alber Freiburg.

Schmitz, H. (2016). Atmospheric Spaces. *Ambiances*. https://journals.openedition.org/ambiances/711

Schröter, J. (2010). The Politics of Intermediality. *Acta Univ. Sapientiae, Film and Media Studies, 2*, 107–124.

Schröter, J. (2011). Discourses and Models of Intermediality. *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture, 13*(3), 1–7. https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1790&context=clcweb

Seesslen, G. (2007). *David Lynch und seine Filme*. Schufren Verlag.

Seitz, M. Z. (2017, June). The Eighth Episode of *Twin Peaks: The Return* is Horrifyingly Beautiful. *Vulture*. https://www.vulture.com/2017/06/twin-peaks-the-return-part-8-atom-bomb-flashback.html

Shaffer, L. (1978). Reflections on the Face in Film. *Film Quarterly, 31*(2), 2–8.

Shaviro, S. (2007, December). Southland Tales. The Pinocchio Theory. http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=611

Shaviro, S. (2010). *Post-Cinematic Affect*. Zero Books.

Shaviro, S. (2016). Post-Continuity: An Introduction. In S. Denson & J. Leyda (Eds.), *Post-Cinema: Theorizing 21st-Century Film* (pp. 51–65). Reframe Books.

Shaw, P. (2017). *The Sublime* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Siegal, N. (2019, March 14). David Lynch's Art Peers Behind the Façade. *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/14/arts/david-lynch-art-drawings-retrospective-netherlands-.html

Sobchack, V. (2000). Introduction. In V. Sobchack (Ed.), *Meta-Morphing. Visual Transformation and the Culture of Quick-Change* (pp. xi–xxiii). University of Minnesota Press.

Spies, W. (2009). Dark Splendor—David the Painter. In *Dark Splendor* catalogue (pp. 19–46). Hatje Cantz Verlag.

Sragow, M. (1999). I Want a Dream When I Go to a Film. In R. A. Barney (Ed.), *David Lynch Interviews* (pp. 200–213). University Press of Missisippi.

Stimson, B. (2006). The Photographic Comportment of Bernd and Hilla Becher. In G. Finney (Ed.), *Visual Culture in Twentieth-Century Germany* (pp. 52–67). Indiana University Press.

Taussig, M. (2002). Miasma. In G. Hawkins & S. Muecke (Eds.), *Culture and Waste: The Creation and Destruction of Value*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Thackera, T. (2014, December 10). Guillermo Kuitca on His Immersive, David Lynch-Inspired Installation at the Fondation Cartier. *Artsy.net*. https://www.artsy.net/article/editorial-guillermo-kuitca-on-his-immersive-david-lynch-inspired

Thain, A. (2010). Rabbit Ears: Locomotion in Lynch's Inland Empire. In F. Xavier-Glayzon (Ed.), *David Lynch in Theory* (pp. 86–100). Litteraria Pragensia.

Thill, S. (2007). David Lynch Interviews—Uncut. *Wired*. https://www.wired.com/2007/01/david-lynch-interviews-uncut/

Thorne, J. (2016). *The Essential Wrapped in Plastic. Pathways to Twin Peaks*. No Publisher.

Tirard, L. (2002). *Moviemakers' Master Class: Private Lessons from the World's Foremost Directors*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Todd, A. (2012). *Authorship and the Films of David Lynch. Aesthetic Receptions in Contemporary Hollywood*. I.B. Tauris.

Todd, J. M. (1986). The Veiled Woman in Freud's "Das Unheimliche". *Signs, 11*(3), 519–528.

Troelsen, A. (2005). Udenværker—strategier for udstillingsanalyse. [Peripheries—Strategies for Exhibition Analysis]. In B. Ingemann & A. H. Larsen (Eds.), *Ny dansk museologi* [New Danish Museology] (pp. 141–165). Aarhus Universitetsforlag.

Troelsen, A. (2019). Sans og samling. Om sammenligninger mellem musik og billede [Senses. On Comparisons between Music and Image]. *Kultur & Klasse, 127*, 91–110.

Twigg, J. (2006). *The Body in Health and Social Care*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Urbach, H. (2010). Exhibition as Atmosphere. *Log, 20* (Fall), 11–17.

Vernallis, C. (2017). Partying in the Great Gatsby: Baz Luhrmann's Audiovisual Sublime. In M. Beugnet, A. Cameron, & A. Fetveit (Eds.), *Cinema and the Attractions of Uncertainty*. Edinburgh University Press.

Verstraete, G. (2010). Introduction. Intermedialities: A Brief Survey of Conceptual Key Issues. *Acta Univ. Sapientiae, Film and Media Studies, 2*, 7–14.

Vidler, A. (1992). *The Architectural Uncanny*. The MIT Press.

Voegelin, S. (2010). *Listening to Noise and Silence. Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*. Continuum Books.

Wahlberg, M. (2008). *Documentary Time. Film and Phenomenology*. University of Minnesota Press.

Wallace, D. F. (1996, September). David Lynch Keeps His Head. *Premiere*. http://www.lynchnet.com/lh/lhpremiere.html

Ward, M. (2019). *Static in the System: Noise and the Soundscape of American Cinema Culture*. University of California Press.

Weber, S. (1973). The Sideshow, or: Remarks on a Canny Moment. *MLN, 88*(6), 1102–1133.

Werneck, A. (2007, April 5). The Deformation Man: David Lynch's Chimerical Universe of Metamorphosis. *Studio International*. https://www.studiointernational.com/index.php/the-deformation-man-david-lynch-s-chimerical-universe-of-metamorphosis

West-Pavlov, R. (2012). *Temporalities*. Routledge.

Wigler, J. (2017, September 3). 'Twin Peaks' Finale: How David Lynch's Showtime Revival Ended. *Hollywood Reporter*. https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/twin-peaks-finale-how-showtime-revival-ended-1034888

Willis, H. (2005). *New Digital Cinema: Reinventing the Moving Image*. Wallflower Press.

Willman, C. (2011, November 9). David Lynch's Strange Solo Album Debut. *The Wrap*. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-music-davidlynch/david-lynchs-strange-solo-album-debut-idUSTRE7A80UU20111109

Wilson, E. G. (2010). Sickness Unto Death: David Lynch & Sacred Irony. In F. Xavier-Glayzon (Ed.), *David Lynch in Theory* (pp. 157–166). Litteraria Pragensia.

Wood, G., & Sheffield, G. (2009, March 1). The Interview: David Lynch. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/film/2009/feb/28/david-lynch-twin-peaks-mulholland-drive

Yi, E. (2011, November 8). David Lynch Doesn't Need You to Like His Album 'Crazy Clown Time'. *The Atlantic*. https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2011/11/david-lynch-doesnt-need-you-to-like-his-album-crazy-clown-time/248076/

Zizek, S. (2008). *When Straight Means Weird and Psychosis is Normal*. https://www.lacan.com/zizripley.html

Exhibition Catalogues

David Lynch. Catalogue to the Lynch exhibition at the Sala Parpalló, Palau dels Scala, Valencia, 1992.

The Air is on Fire. Catalogue to the Lynch exhibition at the Fondation Cartier, Paris, 2007. Édition Xavier Barral.

Dark Splendor. Catalogue to the Lynch exhibition at the Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, 2009. Hatje Cantz Verlag.

The Unified Field. Catalogue to the Lynch exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 2014. University of California Press.

Someone is in My House. Catalogue to the Lynch exhibition at the Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, 2018. Hannibal.

Index

A

Abstract
Abstraction
Absurda (Scissors) (2007)
Adorno, Theodor W.
Aesthetic(s)
Affect
  affective atmosphere
  affective images
  and excess
  and intensity
Affordance

Ageing
Air is on Fire, The (exhibition)
Anderson, Ben
Anderson, Dag T.
Animation
Atmosphere
  and affect
  and body
  and commercials
  as emotional effect
  and enveloping
  and environment
  and immersion
  as in-between spaces
  and noise
  and otherness
  and people
  and space
  as surrounding
  and things/art works
Audience (interaction)
Aumont, Jacques

B

Bacon, Francis
Badalamenti, Angelo
Ballerina (2007)
Band-Aid
Barney, Richard A.
Battersby, Christine
Baudrillard, Jean
Bazin, André
Beauty/beautiful
Becher, Bernd and Hilla
Bell, Chrysta
Berra, John
Berry, Jess

Bille, Mikkel
Black(ness)
Blanchot, Maurice
Blue Velvet (1986)
Blurring
Boat (2007)
Bob Sees Himself Walking Toward a Formidable Abstraction (2000)
Böhme, Gernot
Brightness
Brinkema, Eugenie
Burden, Chris
Burke, Edmund

C

Catching the Big Fish
Chion, Michel
Close-up
Club Silencio scene, *Mulholland Drive*
Commercials
Cooke, Grayson
Cowie, Elizabeth
Cozzolino, Robert
Crazy Clown Time (music video album, 2011)
Curtain

D

Darkened Room, The (2002)
Darkness
Dark Splendor (exhibition)
David Lynch Theater (YouTube channel)
David Lynch's Weather Report (on Lynch's YouTube channel)
Davidlynch.com
Davison, Annette
Deming, Peter
Digitality
    blurring
    camera
    cinema

equipment
event
medium
technology
Dillon, Sarah
Distance
Distorted Nudes
Doane, Mary Ann
Documentary portrait
Documentary/multimedia documentary
anchoring
as communicative process
real
Doubling
Drawing
Dream/dreaming
Dufrenne, Mikel
Dumbland (2002)
Dune (1984)
Duran Duran Unstaged (2011/2015)
Dynamic: 01 (DVD)

E

Ecstasy/ecstasies
Edensor, Tim
Electricity
Elephant Man, The (1980)
Emotion
Engdahl, Horace
Eraserhead (1977)
Eraserhead baby (painting, n.d.)
Evans, Walker
Excess
Exhibitional installation
Experiment(ing)
Experimental films

F

Face
Factory photographs
Felt bodies
Felt space
Fetveit, Arild
Firchow, Peter
Fire
Fondation Cartier (building)
Foucault, Michel
Fragment
  and affect
  as affective spaces
  and excess
  four different kinds
  and German Romanticism
  and order
  and Schlegel
  and space
  as sublime boundlessness
  and whole
Fragmentation
Framing
Freud, Sigmund
Friedberg, Anne

G

Galeries Lafayette
Grandmother, The (1970)
Griffero, Tonino
Grønstad, Asbjørn
Grossman, Julia
Groys, Boris
Grusin, Richard

H

Hainge, Greg
Hallam, Lindsay
Halskov, Andreas

Haptic visuality/sensibility
Harrington, C. Lee
Hello (2012)
Hertz, Neil
Heterotopia
Hoberman, J.
Hoffmann, E. T. A.
Holland, Timothy
Home
House
Huijts, Stijn
Hurley, Dean
Hyperlink (logic)
Hypermediation/hypermediated aesthetics

I

Idea
Idem Paris (2012)
i-doc
I Have a Radio (2020)
Image
  and blurring
  and distortion
  and graininess
  "uncertain images,"
Immersion/immersive/immerse
  darkness
  noise aesthetics
  and reflection
  as sensibility
  and thrownness
In-between space
Indexical(ity)
Industrial capitalism
Industrial Soundscape (2008)
Industrial Symphony No. 1 (1990)
Industry buildings

Inland Empire (2006)
Installation
Installational exhibition
Intensity/intensities
Interactive documentary (i-doc)
Interactivity (logic of)
Interior Dining Room (part of Intervalometer Eperiments)
Intermedia(lity)
Intermedia space
Intervalometer Experiments (2004)
Interview Project, The

J

Jentsch, Ernst
Johnson, Jeff
Jones, Amelia

K

Kandinsky, Wassily
Kant, Immanuel
Kember, Joe
Kubrick, Stanley
Kuitca, Guillermo
Kuzniar, Alice

L

Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe
Lady Blue Shanghai (2010)
Lamp (2003)
Lim, Dennis
Lost Highway (1997)
Louboutin, Christian
Lumière et Compagnie (1995)
Lynch, Austin
Lynch (One) (2007)

M

Machine(ry)

Mactaggart, Allister
Manovic, Lev
Man Walking Dog (n.d.)
Marks, Laura U.
Martin, Richard
Massumi, Brian
McKenna, Kristine
Mister Redman (2000)
Mitchell, W.J.T.
Mixed media
More Things That Happened (included on the *Inland Empire* DVD)
Moving painting
Mulholland Drive (2001)
Music
Music video
My Head is Disconnected (1994)
My Head is Disconnected (exhibition)

N

Nagib, Lucia
Nancy, Jean-Luc
Nechvatal, Joseph
Nieland, Justus
Nochimson, Martha
Noise
    art
    music
    of repetition
    work
    See also Visual noise
Nouvel, Jean
Nudes (2017)

O

Olson, Greg
Opacity
Overexposure

P

Painting
Palimpsest(uous)
PD-150 (digital camera)
Performance
Petersen, Anne Ring
Pethö, Agnes
Pétursdóttir, Thora
Phelan, Peggy
Photograph(y)
  and the blurring of boundaries
  as deictic signifiers
  as image memory
  and time
  as trace
Post-cinematic
Post-perspectival
Precarious
Presence

R

Rabbits (2002)
Rain (2005)
Rank, Otto
Ravetto-Biagioli, Kriss
Ray, Man
Realism
Reality
Real-time projection/images
Red Room, the
Repetition
Road movie
Rock with Seven Eyes (1996)
Rodley, Chris
Rodowick, David
Romantic fragment
Room/sitting room

Rosen, Philip
Ross, Christine
Royle, Nicholas
Ruin
Ryan, Marie-Laure

S

Sandman, The
Scale/proportions
Scene/scenic
Scheibel, Will
Schlegel, Friedrich
Schmitz, Hermann
Schröter, Jens
Screen
  aesthetics
Screened world
Sculpture(d)
Seesslen, Georg
Shaviro, Steven
Shaw, Philip
Shoot
Six Men Getting Sick (1967)
Smoke
Snowmen
Snowmen photographs
Sobchack, Vivian
Someone is in my House (exhibition)
Sound
Space
  sensory space
  of otherness
  spatiality
Spectacle
Spies, Werner
Stage
Staged atmospheres

Steps
Straight Story, The (1999)
Strauss, Richard
Sublime, the
  affect
  and the uncanny
Superimposition/superimpose
Surface
Surveillance camera in *Twin Peaks – Fire Walk with Me*
Surveillance images

T

Taubin, Amy
Taussig, Michael
Texture
  of ageing
Thain, Alanna
Theatre
Third age/fourth age/deep old age
This Man was Shot 0.9502 Seconds Ago (2004)
Time lapse photography
Time/temporality
  and contingency
  and ending of *Twin Peaks: The Return*
  and factory photographs
  and its imprint on the face
  and "meanwhile,"
  and passing of time
  and photography
  of repetition
  and screens
  and *The Straight Story*
  and texture
  and time's working on matter
  and transformation
Title(s)
Today's Number Is (on David Lynch Theater)

Todd, Antony
Total work
Trace
Transformation
Transparent/transparency
Troelsen, Anders
Twin Peaks (1990-1991)
and Audrey's dance
and death of Leland Palmer
and ending
and Leland Palmer's dying scene
Leland Palmer–Bob mirror scene
and mirror image in the pilot
and the Palmer home
Twin Peaks–Fire Walk with Me (1992)
Twin Peaks: The Final Dossier (2017)
Twin Peaks: The Return (2017)
and Albert Rosenfield and Gordon Cole
and "Audrey's dance"
and Cathrine Coulson/Margaret Lanterman memorial
and Cooper and Diane's sad sex scene
Cooper and Diane meet again
and Cooper's sense of home
and death of Log Lady/Margaret Lanterman
and ending
and "Floating cube" fragment
"Gotta Light" episode
and James Hurley singing "Just You" at the Roadhouse
and Las Vegas fragment
and Laura Palmer prom photograph
Twin Peaks police station, episode 17
and White Sands atomic bomb explosion

U

Ujica, Andrei
Ultra-close-up
Uncanny

digital uncanny
and intellectual uncertainty
and Lost Highway
technological uncanny
and *Twin Peaks*
Underexposure
Unified Field, The (exhibition)
Urbach, Henry

V

Veil(ing)
Vidler, Anthony
Viewer/visitor
Visual noise
Voegelin, Salome
Vomit

W

Webby Awards
Web documentary
Website
Weston, Edward
What Did Jack Do? (2017)
With Myself
World
impossible worlds

Z

Zizek, Slavoj